AFTER THE BATTLE

RESISTANCE IN FRANCE

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Front cover: This memorial in Fessy Cemetery recalls the deaths of seven members of the FTP resistance organisation killed in Foges farm (see page 20).

Centre Pages: In March 1944, the plateau at Glières was occupied by more than 450 resistance fighters in open defiance of the occupation forces. All the chalets in the picture were burned down by the Germans, the second on the left being the Resistance HQ. **Inset:** On September 2, 1973, André Malraux inaugurated this monument at Glières built near the spot where 'Tom' was buried. Some 25 metres high, it is the work of Emile Gilioli.

Back Cover: Today, in France thousands of memorials mark the exact spots where men died violently for their country — like these plaques pictured in Thonon.

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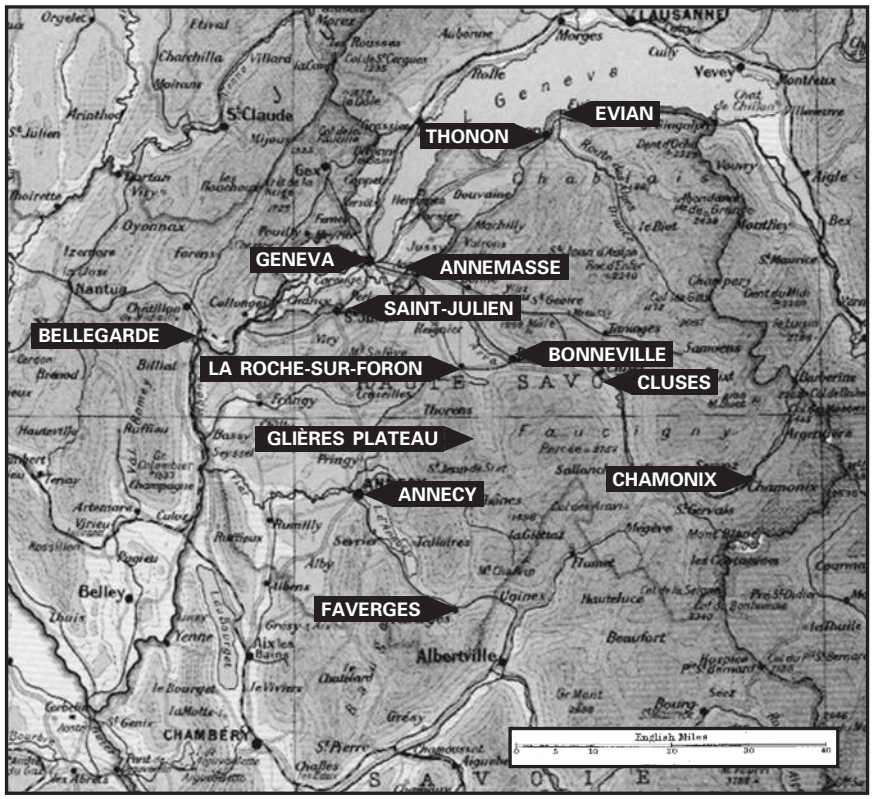
Resistance was a refusal to accept the finality of the military defeat of 1940; a refusal to accept that Vichy was the legitimate voice of France; a refusal to accept Vichy policy of collaboration. As to its chronological extent, the 'Resistance' began with the signing of the armistice in June 1940 and ended late in August 1944 when most of France was freed from the Germans. 'Resisters' were those French men and women who decided to keep on fighting the Germans in violation of the armistice.



We have chosen to illustrate this account of Resistance in France by spotlighting events in one department of France, the Haute-Savoie. The Resistance was in action all over France and, in that respect, Haute-Savoie was no different to the other 90 departments, but one of the most significant incidents took place here: the assembling of 500 resisters at Glières in March 1944 in open defiance of the occupying forces. Also, Haute-Savoie is one of the many departments which was completely liberated by the French Forces of the Interior (FFI) alone: when Allied forces, having landed in the Riviera, reached the area, all the German occupation forces had been killed or captured. On the other hand, attacks against the railway lines were of less importance in south-eastern France for troop and supply trains here were really few compared to the lines feeding the main bodies of the German armies in the West. Also, intelligence activities here did not have the same significance as those in areas containing military sites of major importance such as airfields, U-Boat pens or V-weapon installations. Nevertheless, the Glières operation alone puts Haute-Savoie into a special category of its own in the league table of French Resistance.

THE FRENCH RESISTANCE

By Jean Paul Pallud

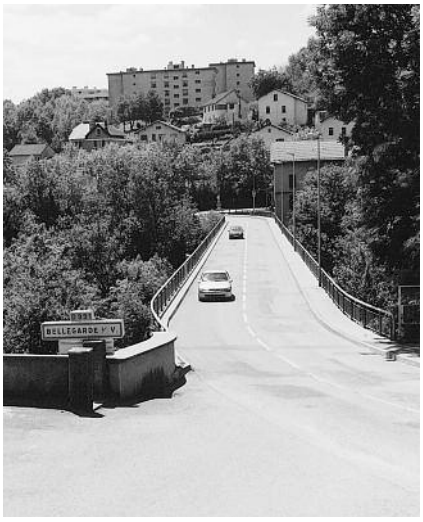
On May 10, 1940, the Wehrmacht launched its lightning attack in the West and in a little over one month, the German armies had conquered the Netherlands and Belgium; the British Expeditionary Force had withdrawn across the Channel, and the French Army had been defeated. By mid-June, the Germans were occupying half of France and they would soon take over the rest of the country. Proposals for the formation of a 'redoubt' in Brittany were dismissed as militarily impractical, and on June 16 Prime Minister Paul Reynaud resigned. Thereupon, Président Albert Lebrun asked the 84-year-old Maréchal Philippe Pétain, Vice-Premier in the late Cabinet, to form a new government. Little time was lost and at 1 a.m. on June 17 a request for an armistice was transmitted to Germany via the Spanish Embassy. At midday, Pétain spoke on the radio to tell the French people of the armistice demand: 'With a tight heart, I tell you today that we must stop fighting'.

The following morning, having learnt that Pétain had applied for armistice terms, the Under-Secretary for Defence of the late Reynaud Cabinet, Général Charles de Gaulle, left Bordeaux aboard a British aircraft bound for London. That afternoon, he broadcast over the BBC an exhortation to his stunned countrymen: 'This war is not settled by the battle of France', he said. He then called on every Frenchmen wherever they were to join him to continue the fight.

The armistice was signed on June 22. Three-fifths of France, including Paris and the entire Atlantic coast, were to be occupied by German troops in order 'to safeguard the interests of the German Reich'. All prisoners of war were to remain in captivity until the conclusion of a peace and, save for a small body of men, the armed forces of France were to be demobilised and disarmed. The cease-fire went into effect at 12.35 a.m. on June 25.

Following the armistice terms, France was divided in half by the 'Demarcation Line' some 1,000 kilometres long. North of it, the country was under German occupation while the south remained 'free', hence its name 'Zone Libre'. Within a matter of weeks, the Germans had turned the Demarcation Line into a formal frontier and the passage of men and matériel was controlled: to cross over, one needed to have a special pass issued by the Germans.

June 18, 1940. 'Is the last word uttered? Is the defeat final? No!' An uncompromising hostility towards Germany and an unshakeable faith in the greatness of France was soon to win Général de Gaulle a position of military and political ascendancy as the architect of the French revival. More and more he would become the focal point around which the Resistance organised itself. (ECPArmées)



To police the border with Switzerland, the Germans decided to occupy a stretch of territory along the border as far south as the Rhône river. These pictures of the 'Demarcation Line' were taken in Bellegarde, at the very end of this zone, on the 'tram' bridge over the Valserine river. The German photographer stood at the northern, occupied, end. (ECPArmées)

PETAIN AND VICHY

Overwhelmed by the extent of the defeat, the political leaders of France resigned and on July 10 the National Assembly (the Senate and Chamber sitting together) voted itself out of existence. All power was vested in Maréchal Pétain in order that he promulgate a new constitution to be ratified by the nation. The Senate and Chamber were abolished, local elections were suppressed, and centrally-controlled organisations deriving their authorities directly from Pétain superseded the institutions of local government. The Third Republic was dead and the Vichy regime was born.

At first, Pétain had in mind to return to Paris but the Germans were not favourable to the idea and instead he chose to establish his government in Vichy, a spa town in the Zone Libre. Pétain held authoritarian and reactionary views and soon the Vichy motto 'Work, Family, Homeland' replaced the republican slogan 'Freedom, Equality, Fraternity'. However, the changes were not all symbolic and thousands of mayors, municipal councillors and civil servants were removed from office. Many political figures of the Third Republic who were seen as being responsible for the moral decline of France and the consequent defeat were arrested, among them the former Prime Ministers Léon Blum and Paul Reynaud. As to the Communist Party, which had been outlawed in the autumn of 1939 for its pacifist stance, Vichy immediately made clear its ferocious opposition. From the summer of 1940, a series of decrees were announced, one excluding foreigners while others suppressed the trade unions and the Freemasons. In October, another decree concerned the Jewish community and those Jews who were not French for five generations at least were barred from teaching, banking and the civil service. Jews of foreign extraction were liable to be confined to camps or put under house arrest (this fate had befallen some 35,000 by the end of the year).

The armistice had left Pétain with the control and administration of the southern, 'free' part of France and, on paper, the power to administrate the occupied northern part. Also, in spite of feverish efforts by Great Britain, most of the French colonial possessions in Africa and South-East Asia remained obedient to Pétain, his administration having also been recognised as the legal government of France by all the major countries in the world, including the USA and USSR. (US diplomatic representation was maintained at Vichy after Pearl Harbor.) The French Army, reduced to 100,000 men, was powerless but the Fleet was mostly intact and under French flag. It suited the Germans perfectly to have Pétain as the figurehead of the French government and, careful not to needlessly alienate French public opinion, they even compromised on some points.

Whatever semblance of power Pétain might have, France was in a disastrous situation. Huge losses had been sustained and 1½ million prisoners were detained in Germany, causing an acute labour shortage to factories and farms. (The Germans were soon to use the POWs as hostages to exert pressures on Vichy.) To aggravate the situation, the armistice terms required that France cover the costs of the occupying German armies until a final peace treaty was signed. In July, the Germans indicated what that cost would

Maréchal Pétain and Amiral François Darlan paid a visit to Haute-Savoie on September 23, 1941 (the previous day, they had visited Savoie). The Préfet, Edouard Dauliac, greeted them at the Hôtel de Ville of Annecy whereupon the band struck up the old anti-German patriotic song *You'll not have Alsace and Lorraine* to much cheering. (Archives Départementales)

be: a daily compensation of 400 million Francs! Vichy argued, pointing out that such a huge amount would pay for the maintenance of millions of soldiers, but to no avail. In addition, although the civil administration remained nominally under the control of the Vichy government it was, in varying degrees, quickly subjected to German supervision. Soon, industry, banking and business were under their overall control and raw materials and manufactured stocks were levied on a considerable scale. Day after day, a steady drain of goods and money sapped the strength of France and the country was soon short of food, coal, clothes and other basic commodities.

On October 24, on his way back from a meeting with Generalissimo Franco of Spain, Hitler halted his train at Montoire (50 kilometres north of Tours) to see Pétain. The meeting at the station ended without any definite outcome and Pétain later broadcast that 'a collaboration between our two countries has been discussed and I have accepted the principle'. 'Collaboration' meant on the Vichy side, bargaining and compromising to try to save as much as possible for France, but to the Germans, it meant acquiescence to German demands, threats and blackmail. Meanwhile, individual Frenchmen, bemused by defeat, passively accepted Pétain and his regime. The belief that Britain was about to be defeated was commonplace and the acceptance of Hitler's orders seemed unavoidable.

Not all Frenchmen accepted Pétain and his regime passively and on the night of August 10/11, 1940, hand-written placards were posted up in the main street of Annecy: 'De Gaulle will win! Frenchmen are those who defend the country, not those who sell out France!' More from the same hand appeared during the night of August 23/24: 'De Gaulle is defending France. The senile men of Vichy are selling her!' The first issue of the clandestine newspaper *Liberté* appeared on November 25, 1940. It was three sheets, well edited and printed, and it was sent by post or put through letter boxes. One of those who distributed *Liberté* in Annecy, M. de Mollerat, was soon arrested by the Vichy authorities and sentenced to one month imprisonment. Nevertheless, decidedly anti-German, anti-Vichy, and pro-British, *Liberté* kept on appearing.

DE GAULLE

On the evening of June 23, in a new broadcast from London, de Gaulle announced that he was setting up a French National Committee which would account for its actions to whatever legal representatives of the French people could be found after the Germans had been driven out. By the end of the month, the British government had recognised him as the leader 'of all the Free French, wherever they may be, who rally to him in support of the Allied cause'. In vain, the French government ordered him to return, and on August 2 a military court condemned him to death in absentia for desertion.

Following his radio appeals, some of the French forces then in Great Britain sided with him, but the call to the colours came to an abrupt halt on July 3 when the Royal Navy shelled the French fleet at Mers el-Kébir in Algeria, killing over 1,000 French sailors. Disheartened, most of the soldiers still in Great Britain and nearly all of the sailors chose repatriation to France and by the end of July only 7,000 men had joined de Gaulle.

During the next three months, some of the French overseas possessions rallied to the Général's cause and men sharing his faith in the future of France progressively joined him in Great Britain. However, the number of recruits was still small, and those of any prominence were few (only three generals and one admiral came over to his side prior to November 1942). Soon, the first Free French troops were fighting side by side with the British in North Africa and in January 1941 one battalion took part in the capture of Tobruk. Though the French force was to remain militarily insignificant for the next three years, nevertheless, the Free French stood as the symbol that not all of France had capitulated. As to the formation of resistance groups in metropolitan France, it was not until March 1941 that de Gaulle made the first reference to such groups.

RESISTANCE STARTED

The first acts of resistance took place in the very early days of the occupation. Here and there, individuals manifested their hostility through futile acts such as daubing anti-German slogans on walls; laying flowers on the graves of British servicemen; shouting and hissing when Hitler appeared on cinema screens, or tearing down placards posted by the German authorities. More positive was the spontaneous help given to Jews, escaping POWs, and British soldiers left behind in the hectic withdrawal, all trying to reach the Zone Libre.

Before June was out, anti-German leaflets started to circulate in France. At first, handwritten and multiplied through the chain letter process, they mostly just reproduced information heard on the BBC. Soon, stencilled leaflets appeared, then some were printed. The Germans repeatedly reported seizing leaflets and occasionally were successful in arresting some of the individuals who distributed them. Also in June, telephone lines were cut, the odd fuel dump set on fire, cars were sabotaged, locomotives and carriages damaged, and railway signalling equipment disabled. Such acts were easy to achieve without explosives and instances of sabotage increased in number day by day.

In response, the German authorities posted notices warning the population of the risks they incurred because of the 'foolish acts of a few lost men'. Strikes and agitation were punished with increasing severity, curfews imposed and local communities fined. As the attacks and acts of sabotage increased, the German reaction multiplied in severity. As early as the summer of 1940, suspects were arrested, tried and condemned on the slightest element of guilt. 'Bekanntmachungen' (notices) written in German and French appeared regularly on walls, announcing that a 'Kriegsgericht' (court-martial) had sentenced two, three or more men to death for sabotage, and that the men listed had been shot.

Emmanuel d'Astier de la Vigerie, de Gaulle's Commissioner for the Interior, and Général Paul Legentilhomme, second to the Commissioner for War, review a company of French commandos drawn up on the parade ground of Wellington Barracks close by Buckingham Palace, London. (ECPArmées)

Following orders issued by the OKW (German Armed Forces High Command) which authorised — where necessary — the taking of hostages in the occupied countries, the Military Governor of France, General der Infanterie Otto von Stülpnagel, proclaimed in November 1940 (repeated in February 1941) that 'the population as a whole must be considered responsible for the acts of sabotage'. However, in the early days, although hostages (that is persons acknowledged not to have any responsibility for the act of sabotage concerned) were taken, none were actually executed.

Meanwhile, the anti-German leaflets had progressively improved to become clandestine newspapers. The first such news sheet was *Pantagruel* which appeared in October 1940, followed by *Liberté* in November and *Libération* in December. In spite of the German efforts to eradicate them by arresting editorial staffs (among them Raymond Deiss, the founder of *Pantagruel,* who was executed in 1943) and dismantling printing works, the distribution became larger and more regular. Some newspapers disappeared but others kept on appearing produced by new men and women and several of the early titles were still in existence in 1944. Thus, for example, *Défense de la France,* which had started out as a mimeographed sheet in January 1941, printed 20,000 copies in 1942 and 400,000 by 1944. By then, the clandestine press comprised some 100 different national and about 500 regional or local titles, the total of which represented a daily circulation of over two million. (A catalog compiled after the war listed over 1,000 titles of clandestine newspapers published during the occupation.)

While they printed and distributed their literature, these men and women united by their common will to resist the Germans started to organise themselves. The 'Resistance' was as yet an uncoordinated collection of groups, inexpert and with nearly no weaponry. All were pro-British, for Great Britain was fighting the Germans, but most

Wellington Barracks in June 1999 and the Queen's Guard is mounted by the 1st Battalion Welsh Guards Prince of Wales' Company. On this particular day, Lieutenant Henry Bettinson was the Subaltern of the Guard and Inspecting Officer for the parade formed up by RSM Martyn Miles — the tall, upright, moustacheod figure we all saw marching behind the coffin of the Princess of Wales.

Among those who refused to accept that France could no longer pursue the war was the corps of the professional officers and NCOs. All but a few were anti-German by education and, though they remained mostly loyal to Vichy, they did their best to not comply with the 1940 armistice terms. In Haute-Savoie, the most active of them was Commandant Jean Vallette d'Osia. Taken prisoner at Saint-Valéry-en-Caux, on the Channel coast, on June 13, he escaped, was recaptured, and escaped again to return to the 'Zone Libre'. He wanted to join de Gaulle but instead he was given command of a battalion of the Armistice Army, the 27ème Bataillon de Chasseurs Alpins (BCA), due to be raised in Annecy. There, from July, he began to hide as many armaments as could be spirited away from the armistice commission. The military and civilian authorities contributed willingly and soon tons of weaponry had been secretly stockpiled in farms, manors and caves around the town. Throughout 1941, while he vigorously trained the 27ème BCA, Vallette d'Osia worked with great discretion at assembling a secret army. Shadow companies and sections were formed, their commanders designated and men enlisted, with hidden weapons and ammunition allocated. These pictures were taken on the top of the Semnoz mountain, just south of Annecy, as a company of the 27ème BCA marched past the battalion flag; third from right in the shot above is Commandant Vallette d'Osia. Many of these men were to join in the battle at Glières in March 1944. (ECPArmées)

were yet without any reliable contact with Britain or de Gaulle. Anti-German acts were committed daily, though yet unspectacular, and intelligence was gathered. Often, the Germans succeeded in discovering the perpetrators of some of these activities, which they ruthlessly repressed, but the fires of resistance had been lit and they failed to prevent its steady growth.

In London, de Gaulle had formed a special staff, known from January 1942 as the Bureau Central de Renseignements et d'Actions (BCRA), which he directed to dispatch agents to France to establish communication with resistance groups and set up intelligence and sabotage networks. Within a month of the armistice, the Free French had sent in their first agents, and by the end of 1940 they had organised the first intelligence circuit, the 'Confrérie Notre Dame'. Others were starting up but not without the greatest difficulty and risk as is shown by the fate of Honoré d'Estienne d'Orves, an officer of the Navy, who had been landed in Brittany by boat on December 21. From Nantes on Christmas Day 1940, he established the first radio link between occupied France and the Free French in London. He then worked undercover for a month until he was arrested on the night of January 21/22. Tried by the Germans with 26 other 'resisters' in May, he was sentenced to death. Vichy intervened and the Germans suspended the execution until August when Fähnrich Alfons Moser of the Kriegsmarine was shot in Paris. That put an end to any further stays of execution and in the early hours of August 29, 1941, d'Estienne d'Orves was shot with two of his comrades at Mont Valérien, a fort near Paris.

In Britain, the Special Operations Executive, known as SOE for short, had been formed in November 1940 to stimulate and assist subversive elements in enemy-held countries. Churchill's directive to SOE was simple: 'to set Europe ablaze'. As far as France was concerned, two independent sections were created within SOE: F Section which avoided all contact with the Free French, and RF Section that worked in conjuction with them. The French were firmly opposed to F Section — a body pursuing in France aims given it solely by British services — but, nevertheless, in terms of agents deployed in France, RF Section was never as large as F Section. The resulting tensions brought nothing good. The first SOE agent to reach France was landed in Brittany on March 27, 1941, and another was parachuted in near Châteauroux, in unoccupied central France, on the night of May 5/6; on June 13, a Whitley dropped the first two containers of supplies to an SOE group near Limoges.

In the early days, the scarcity of transport aircraft restricted drastically what could be done and not until August were there more than five aircraft available. Consequently, only 1½ tons of supplies were dropped in 1941. The same year, only one man was flown in and another one out. Nevertheless, BCRA and SOE worked hand in hand to encourage and supply the resistance movements, and the links with their groups grew progressively stronger.

Another British organisation that played a major role was the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) which daily sent heartening messages to the French people, telling them that Britain was fighting on and that Germany would be defeated in the end. And it was through the BBC that the French heard the voice of Général de Gaulle, the voice of 'La France Libre'.

THE COMMUNISTS JOIN IN

One element of the resistance movement in France requiring a special explanation is that of the Communist Party. Pacifist since its birth, from 1936 the Party had advocated intervention in Spain in support of the republican cause. In 1938, it criticised the weakness of France and Britain at the Munich Conference (see *After the Battle* No. 62) and advocated resistance to Germany. In August 1939, following the signing of the Soviet-German Non-Aggression Pact, the Party did another volte-face. Having received new directives from Moscow, it now actively started campaigning for peace with Germany, denouncing the war as a struggle between competing imperialist nations. This reversal of policy was disconcerting and, consequently, disheartened militants left the Party in droves. From August, the French government applied sanctions: the Communist Party was outlawed, its organisations and newspapers suppressed and thousands of its leaders imprisoned. Following the declaration of war in September, the communists kept on promoting pacifist activities that included strikes in arms factories. Odd acts of sabotage were committed and three communists caught in the act of sabotaging aircraft engines in the Farman factory in April 1940 were tried and executed in June.

After the armistice, the communists lost no time in approaching the Germans to seek permission to resume the publication of the Party newspaper, *l'Humanité.* The Germans agreed but Vichy refused. Before the end of the year, the Germans released over 300 of those communists who had been imprisoned by the French. In this early period, communist propaganda attacked 'British imperialism' and scoffed at de Gaulle as being an agent of Anglo-Saxon capitalism. However, the Party was not overtly pro-German and did not outwardly praise Germany or its political system. From May 1941, it called for the creation of a 'Front National' embracing

Bekanntmachung
Der Hilfsarbeiter
Victor WALLARD
wohnhaft in Saint-Crépin (Oise), ist wegen Gewalttat gegen die deutsche Wehrmacht und wegen verbotenen Waffen- und Munitionsbesitzes durch das Kriegsgericht zum
TODE
verurteilt und am
1. November 1940
ERSCHOSSEN worden
Den 2. November 1940. Das Kriegsgericht.
ARRÊT
de la Cour Martiale
Pour avoir commis dès actes de violence contre l'Armée Allemande et pour avoir possédé des armes et des munitions, le nommé :
Victor WALLARD
Manœuvre
domicilié à Saint-Crépin (Oise)
a été condamné à la
PEINE DE MORT
Il a été
FUSILLÉ
le 1er Novembre 1940
Fait le 2 Novembre 1940. La Cour Martiale.

all French parties and taking up a neutral stance between Germany and England. The Party was uncompromisingly hostile toward the Vichy regime and started promoting demonstrations and strikes, with some successes as evidenced in the coal mines in northern France early in 1941.

On June 22, Germany attacked the USSR. Called to action by the Soviets, the French Communist Party made yet another about face and now declared it was standing together with Great Britain, de Gaulle and the Free French. The nascent Front National was quickly steered onto an anti-German course and it put out a call to all those who had not yet joined the Resistance. The Front National was the first of the resistance organisations to be established at the same time in both the Zone Occupée and Zone Libre. Contacts were made with the other resistance movements and with the Free French in London. Soon, a clandestine armed force was created, 'Francs Tireurs et Partisans' (FTP) named after the guerrilla heroes of the Franco-Prussian war of 1870-71.

Until then, the Resistance had been the concern only of a minority of the population but the communists applied themselves to making it the concern of all Frenchmen. To this end, they began to denounce the Germans as responsible for all the misery suffered by the French people, promoting complaints and strikes. Also, the communists quickly brought another dimension to the underground war. Until then, fearing bloody reprisals, resistance groups had avoided carrying out too provocative actions against the Germans. Now, the communists called for widespread and immediate action and an 'Organisation Spéciale' was soon set up in Paris to assassinate German officers. Their first victim, as already mentioned, was Fähnrich Alfons Moser, a clerk with the Kriegsmarine, who was shot in the underground Metro on the morning of August 21. On August 26, the Germans shot five communists in reprisal, the first hostages to be executed. On September 3, the Organisation Spéciale attacked and wounded an NCO in Paris whereupon three more hostages were shot; by mid-September, following three more attacks, nearly 30 hostages had been executed. A new word appeared on the Bekanntmachungen as they made known that 'Geiseln' (hostages) had been shot in reprisal.

On the morning of August 21, 1941, a two-man squad led by Pierre Georges (nom de guerre 'Fabien') shot Fähnrich Alfons Moser, a clerk of the Kriegsmarine, as he boarded a train at this spot on the platform in the Barbès-Rochechouart station of the Paris Metro. Today, on the tiled wall, a plaque recalls this action of the Resistance. On August 26, the Germans executed five communists in reprisal.

On September 16, 1941, Generalfeldmarschall Wilhelm Keitel, head of OKW, signed a directive prescribing how to react when the authority of the Germans was challenged in an occupied country. Every attack, whatever or wherever it took place, must henceforth be attributed to the communists, and for each German killed, 50 to 100 communists should be shot. On September 28, in another directive, General von Stülpnagel specified how the hostages should be chosen: in each departments of occupied France, lists were to be drawn up giving the names of men already in prison with the communists and gaullists at the top.

Meanwhile, faced with increasing security measures in Paris, the Organisation Spéciale carried the war to provincial towns. An operation planned at Rouen failed but on October 20, a two-man squad shot Oberstleutnant Karl Hotz, the Feldkommandant of Nantes. The following day Kriegs-Verwaltungsrat Hans-Gottfried Reimers, an officer of the military administration, was shot at Bordeaux. The Germans lost no time in reacting and on October 21 and 22, 43 hostages were shot at Nantes and five more in Paris, and 50 more at Bordeaux on October 24.

In December, following an attack against a German canteen in Paris in which three men were killed, Berlin ordered von Stülpnagel to have 100 hostages executed and 500 communists and 1,000 Jews deported to Germany. Although the notice announced the execution of '100 Jews, communists or anarchists having direct links with the perpetrators of the attack', in actual fact 92 were hostages shot on December 15, none of course having had any part in the attack as they were in prison at the time.

From the beginning, von Stülpnagel had expressed his personal view that the execution of hostages was an ill-advised measure and in January 1942 he asked to be relieved of his command. His successor was his own cousin, General der Infanterie Carl-Heinrich von Stülpnagel, but Hitler also brought in SS-Obergruppenführer Carl-Albrecht Oberg as Höherer SS- und Polizeiführer (Higher SS and Police Chief) in France.

More hostages were shot at Dijon in January, at Le Havre in February, and at Caen and Le Havre in April. By May, about 500 people had been executed over the previous eight months in France (not including those sentences carried out in the four departments of the Nord and Pas-de-Calais that were subordinated to the German military command in Brussels). In August, two grenades were thrown at German soldiers in the Jean Bouin Stadium in Paris, killing eight, resulting in 98 hostages being executed on the 11th. Some weeks later, a bomb exploded in the Rex cinema in Paris for which 116 hostages were shot on September 21 — 46 in Paris and 70 in Bordeaux. This massacre was followed by a flurry of attacks against the Germans, 16 incidents in three weeks.

From the end of 1942, convinced that execution of hostages was not a good measure to apply in France, the Germans tended to exercise restraint though they continued to carry out executions on a smaller scale right up until the end of the occupation. Estimates vary greatly as to how many innocent people lost their lives between 1941 and 1944 but the number is believed to be between 5,000 and 10,000.

From the beginning, de Gaulle and most of the other resistance movements made their opposition clear to the assassinations being carried out by the communists. While the reprisals did not worry the communists, who were convinced that they were thus precipitating a revolutionary situation, the gaullists reasoned that they might easily create a divide between the Resistance and the people. Also, it was feared that German countermeasures would weaken the Resistance as a military movement which would need to be ready in strength to join with the Allies when the time of liberation came. Pointing out that it was 'absolutely justified that Germans

Early on the morning of October 20, at Nantes, a two-man commando led by Gilbert Brustlein (the other man with 'Fabien' when Moser was killed in Paris) shot Oberstleutnant Karl Hotz, the town Feldkommandant. This is where Hotz was killed in front of No. 1, Rue du Roi Albert. In reprisal to Hotz's assassination, on October 21 and 22 the Germans shot 43 hostages at Nantes and five more in Paris.

On October 25, the Germans buried Oberstleutnant Hotz at Nantes. Here, the cortège passes through Place Maréchal Foch.

Today, Hotz lies in the German War Cemetery at Pornichet, west of Saint-Nazaire. *Right:* **C. R-Jeanguillaume took the comparison.**

should be killed by French' (BBC broadcast on October 23, 1941), nevertheless de Gaulle insisted that the conduct of the war 'must be directed by those who have charge of it'. For the time being, the order he gave was not to kill Germans for that reason only, as it was too easy for the enemy to retaliate by the massacre of unarmed resistance soldiers. However, the two strategies were irreconcilable and right up until the liberation of France in 1944, the communists derided the wait-and-see policy of the other armed resistance groups and instead asked for more weapons to harass the Germans.

Although the usefulness of killing an odd German soldier might be debatable, in actual fact the reprisals helped the Resistance more than they hindered it. For every man and woman that reprisals frightened into acquiescence, a score were shocked into opposition and so became ripe material for recruiting.

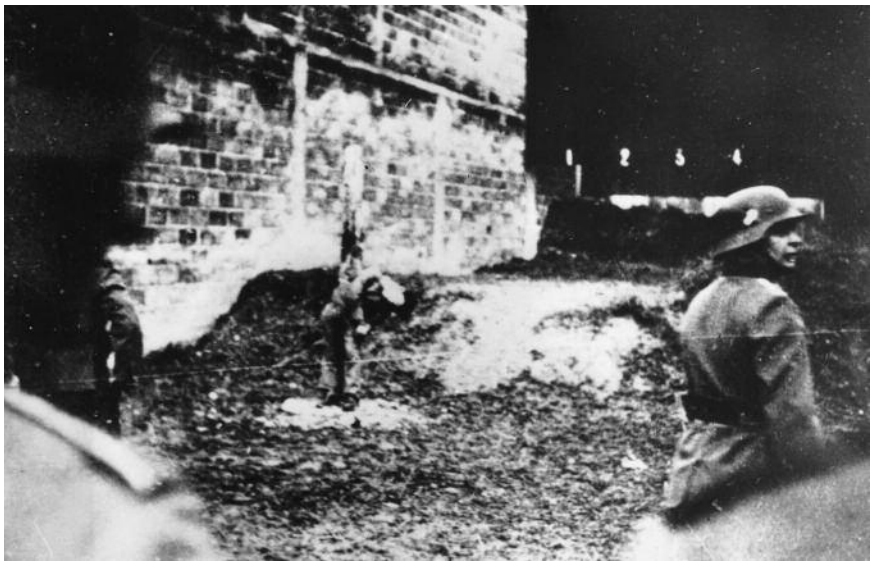
1942: DEVELOPMENT

Of the many resistance groups which had come into being in northern France, some were suppressed by the Germans, or succumbed to internal schisms while others survived and expanded. By the beginning of 1942, the more important ones were: 'Libération Nord' (recruiting in socialist and trade unionist circles); 'Organisation Civile et Militaire' (managers in industry and civil servants); 'Front National' (controlled by the communists but recruiting from every social class, democrats and Catholics included); 'Défense de la France', 'Ceux de la Résistance' and 'Ceux de la Libération'.

In the southern part of France, the absence of German forces had made things easier and the groups were more organised and more stable than in the north. They grew in number and strength until the more important of them, such as 'Combat' (recruiting among reserve officers, civil servants and the middle classes); 'Libération Sud' (socialists and trade unionists) and 'Franc Tireur' (radicals and intellectuals), covered the whole of the Zone Libre. The 'Front National' was also well established in the southern part of France.

Each movement had developed singly, with virtually no co-ordination between it and other groups, due of course to the fact that secrecy meant difficulty of communication. Also, the French people had not been unified by the disaster suffered by their nation and the various movements were divided by differing shades of political opinion. As the Resistance grew in strength, it was therefore faced with the problem of bringing some sort of unity out of the anarchy of rival groups. Up until 1942, de Gaulle — the man who alone had not lost faith in the darkest hours of 1940 — had been merely a symbol of resistance. Now, the Resistance began to turn to him as a leader.

At the end of 1941, Jean Moulin had arrived in Britain. A former Préfet dismissed by Vichy, he had sounded out such resistance leaders as he could find in south-eastern France before making his way to London via Lisbon. He made an excellent impression on de Gaulle (and the British as well) and the Général decided to send him back as his personal representative in the Zone Libre. According to the directive de Gaulle gave to Moulin, his task was to organise the movement into separate cells, each of about seven men, to be the nucleus of a secret army that would be able to rise up when the Allies came. Before the invasion, sabotage and assassination were envisaged as probable tasks. Meanwhile, liaison officers were to be sent to London to discuss the command structure (the highest direction would come from England) and to plan the arming of the cells. After two abortive flights in November and December to drop him to an SOE reception committee, Moulin was finally parachuted back south of Avignon on the night of



According to the original caption, this resister was shot in 1941 in Amiens because he had cut German telecommunication lines. The pictures were taken by a German soldier who then took the film to a local photographer, M. Pierre Caron, to have it developed. He printed up extra copies which soon found their way to London. The Germans shot 28 resisters in this former French army shooting range in the moat of the Amiens citadel, the first in December 1941, the last in August 1944. If the caption is correct as to the date and place, this man was Maurice Garin executed on December 30, 1941. Today, a memorial recalls the deaths of the 28 resisters. (USNA)

Arriving in London late in 1941 as the representative of three resistance organisations, Jean Moulin was the first person of any political standing to come out of France and join the Free French. Parachuted back as de Gaulle's delegate, he worked hard throughout 1942 and early 1943 to bring together the various resistance movements. On June 21, 1943, he was caught by the SD at Caluire, near Lyons, where eight resistance leaders had assembled for a meeting, and was so badly treated by his captors that he died on July 8. (ECPArmées)

Général Henri Giraud (right), the man chosen by the Allies to enlist in a common endeavour, had reached Algiers on November 7, 1942. Admiral François Darlan (left), the commander of the armed forces of Vichy, was in Algiers when the Allies landed on November 9. He directed that French forces break off hostilities; an agreement was soon reached with the Americans and he was named High Commissioner. This picture was taken on December 18, four days before Darlan was assassinated to be succeeded by Giraud. (ECPArmées)

January 1/2, 1942.

Throughout the spring and the summer, Moulin, code-name 'Max', worked with the movements' leaders to make the concept of co-ordinated resistance a reality. In this, he succeeded admirably and in October 1942 the three major organisations in the Zone Libre — Combat, Libération Sud and Franc Tireur — agreed to amalgamate their armed forces into a unique underground army, the 'Armée Secrète'. In November, de Gaulle named Général Charles Delestraint, code-named 'Vidal', as the commander of this secret army-to-be.

Meanwhile, in northern France, Christian Pineau, one of the leaders of Libération Nord, went to London in April to see de Gaulle. Their meeting was none too easy but Pineau was reassured and he returned to France carrying a signed document in which de Gaulle made clear, though in general terms, his political vision for France after the war. From June, the clandestine press largely reproduced the text.

By the end of 1942, the resistance movement was united, though not yet strongly, behind the de Gaulle leadership. Efficient groups were working to operate the clandestine press, the organisation of the air-dropping of supplies, and the making of forged papers. Specialised members infiltrated the civil services, while others were conducting sabotage or gathering information.

Support received from England was still limited by insufficient air transport (the number of available aircraft had risen to around 20 by the end of 1942), and only 23 tons of supplies had been dropped to the movement in France that year. Nevertheless, radio sets, propaganda equipment and money had been received, as well as some weapons and explosives. Nineteen agents had been taken to England by Lysander, while 15 were flown to France.

THE OCCUPATION OF THE ZONE LIBRE

When they planned Operation 'Torch', the landing in French North Africa, the Allies needed to enlist the co-operation of the French authorities. De Gaulle himself could not be involved as strong anti-gaullist views were still held in British high command circles and many were of the opinion that he possessed only a fleeting symbolic value. As to the Americans, they were profoundly distrustful of de Gaulle from the start, his frequent aloof demeanor (which he felt he had to adopt to preserve the dignity of France) no doubt doing much to make them think he was an aristocrat at heart.

Instead, therefore, the Allies decided to do a deal with Général Henri Giraud with whom the Americans were in contact. Taken prisoner in 1940, he had succeeded to escape from the Königstein fortress in April 1942 and returned to the Zone Libre via Switzerland. Giraud was picked up from the coast of southern France by submarine on November 4 and conferred with Lieutenant General Dwight D. Eisenhower, the Allied Commander-in-Chief for North Africa, at Gibraltar. He was moved to Algiers late on November 7 although he arrived too late for him to have any influence on short-term events. President Roosevelt, whose hostility to de Gaulle was deep-seated, had insisted that the gaullists be kept in the dark and they only learned of the invasion from news broadcast on the day it happened, November 9.

By chance, Admiral François Darlan, the commander of the armed forces of Vichy, happened to be in North Africa at the time and on the 10th he directed that French armed forces break off hostilities and observe neutrality. (The extent to which he was acting with Pétain's consent still remains unclear.) An agreement was reached with Eisenhower's deputy, Major General Mark W. Clark, and Darlan was named High Commissioner of Algeria, Morocco and French West Africa. In the Resistance, the news created a widespread dismay and on November 15 it issued a communiqué stressing that its uncontested leader was Général de Gaulle. The problem was soon solved for Darlan was assassinated on December 24 by a young royalist, his death being a marked set-back for the Americans, and Giraud succeeded him as High Commissioner.

Following the Allied landing in North Africa, the Mediterranean coast of France was even more vulnerable and the German Commander-in-Chief in the West, Generalfeldmarschall Gerd von Rundstedt, was ordered to take over the Zone Libre forthwith. (As early as December 1940, Hitler had issued his Directive No. 19 which stated that 'In case those parts of the French Colonial Empire now controlled by Général Weygand should show signs of revolt, preparations will be made for the rapid occupation of the still unoccupied territory of metropolitan France.') Orders were issued and forces assembled in their jumping-off positions along the demarcation line.

Pétain and Weygand had long discussed the possibility of German entry into the unoccupied zone with the commanders of the Vichy army and all had agreed that there was no possible way of countering it. Accordingly, French outposts had been ordered not to oppose such a move.

The Germans entered the Zone Libre early on the morning of November 11 with ten divisions, two of which were armoured. At the same time, six Italian divisions marched into south-eastern France. Some of his advisers tried to persuade Pétain to escape to North Africa but he refused and in his radio broadcast later that day, he angrily reproached the Germans for violating the terms of the armistice. Operation 'Anton' proceeded as planned, without opposition, and on November 12 German and Italian troops found themselves holding the whole of the Mediterranean coast of France (see also *After the Battle* No. 76).

The 100,000-strong French 'armistice army'

was disbanded and many of the demobilised officers and soldiers joined the Resistance. As they were mostly opposed to guerrilla warfare, they formed a movement of their own, the 'Organisation de Résistance de l'Armée' (ORA). Then, when word came that a new French army had started to assemble in North Africa under Général Giraud, many others went to join it via Spain.

By the end of 1942, the two main justifications for Vichy's policy of collaboration had disappeared. The first one — to avoid total occupation of France — had just collapsed, and the second — to capitalise on a German victory — seemed more and more an illusion as the tide of war turned against Germany. Paradoxically, the collaborationist policy of Vichy did not soften up. The Soviet victories in the East fuelled the paranoid anti-communist sentiments of the regime and led some to agree to second the German war effort in order to save Europe from Bolshevisation. Vis-à-vis the Resistance, Vichy chose to ascribe all acts of 'terrorism' to the communists who willingly co-operated by claiming credit for all acts of sabotage and assassinations. By the end of the year, under the pressure from the Germans who were not satisfied with the reliability of the French police, Vichy decided to create the 'Milice', a paramilitary force which could be counted on to deal with the 'terrorists'.

As far as the French people were concerned, their passive acceptance of the Vichy regime had waned while confidence in Maréchal Pétain had steadily declined. This, combined with food shortages, censorship, the forced labour draft, and the reprisals, progressively strengthened a determination to get rid of the occupiers.

On the afternoon of November 11, 1942, as part of their occupation of the Zone Libre, German troops arrived in Annemasse and took control of the whole length of the border with Switzerland. Elsewhere in Haute-Savoie, it was the Italians who somewhat cautiously took over: this picture was taken in Rue Carnot at Annecy. In their sector, the Germans soon began arresting the many Jews who had reached Haute-Savoie in the hope of crossing into Switzerland. In January 1943, Italian troops replaced the Germans on the border with Switzerland. (Archives Départementales)

THE 'STO' AND THE MAQUIS

In April 1942, the Germans had induced Vichy to put into effect a plan, code-named the 'Relève' (Relief), aimed at conscripting labour for work in Germany on the understanding that, in exchange, the Germans would release French POWs at the ratio of one prisoner for three workers. All in all, less than 250,000 workers responded to the call so in February 1943 the Germans imposed a forced labour draft, the 'Service du Travail Obligatoire' (STO) specifying that all men born in 1920, 1921 and 1922 must report for work in Germany. In the next year and a half, the STO was to provide the Reich factories with some 450,000 workers, albeit poorly motivated.

On the other hand, the STO turned out to be a most efficient recruiting office for the Resistance. Thousands of those called up refused to go and, to escape the draft, they just disappeared from everyday life. Many sought refuge in hilly and wooded areas, hence the name soon given to them, the 'maquis', which was the word to describe the rugged areas of southern France covered with thick shrub-like vegetation where many of them hid.

At the beginning, the Germans looked on these groups as little more than gangs of outlaws, yet it was through the Maquis that the national uprising was to find its logistical bases. Being located in remote areas, the Maquis were ideally placed to collect and hide stores of parachuted arms; also, they could be trained to use them in reasonable conditions of security.

At first surprised by the size of the exodus, the resistance movements soon began making contact with these individuals to start their arming and training. This was not easy for most of the men were more anxious to hide than to indulge in operations against the Germans. All the movements rose to the challenge, the FTP proving particularly active, and gradually the 'Maquis' were assembled into camps, where organisation and discipline could take shape. In London, de Gaulle's BCRA drew up plans determining the future employment of the Maquis.

Progressively, from a wide variety of backgrounds, more and more joined the labour draft dodgers: Jews; residents of the Alsace or Lorraine — regions of France that the Germans had incorporated into the Reich — who refused to join the Wehrmacht; dispirited 'Hiwis' (Hilfswilligen), i.e. former Soviet POWs who had volunteered to serve with the German forces for non-combat duties, etc. By the beginning of 1944, there were 30,000 'maquisards' in southern France and 10,000 in the north, more or less effectively organised, and in contact with, though only partially controlled by, de Gaulle's organisation.

Following the unwilling departure of 30 men conscripted for work in Germany on January 15, 1943, gendarmes rounded up 50 more workers from two factories at Cran and marched them to the German recruiting office on Rue Royale *(left).* **Four days later, 15 'volunteers' were put on a train to Germany. In February, those drafted for the STO forced labour were ordered to report for a census and medical checks started on March 1. The first train to Germany was due to leave Annecy on March 15 and the station was cordoned off by police forces. However, of the 800 men due to go, only 138 turned up. Escorted into the station, they uttered hostile curses to Pétain and Laval as they were forcefully put onto the train. Later, six men managed to escape when the train halted at Hauteville, ten kilometres down the line. All in all, of those men required to register in Haute-Savoie, nearly 900 disappeared from their homes and sought refuge in the 'Maquis'. Only 381 men actually went to work in Germany.**

Throughout the spring of 1943, the Italians conducted sweeps through the mountains of Haute-Savoie. On April 23, a unit of 20 Alpini raided a Maquis camp on the Môle mountain above Bonneville; 20 Maquis or so were seen escaping. The operation was repeated on May 18 at Cormand on the other side of the mountain where shots were exchanged with another group of 20 men. The Italians recovered a dozen rifles and set fire to three chalets. On June 8, they launched another operation above Sallanches and this time, surprise was achieved and one Maquis was killed and 20 captured. On June 13, the Alpini raided a camp down the Véry pass, above Megève. Fifteen Maquis escaped but ten were captured. The Italians then set fire to the chalet used by the Maquis. *Left:* **In the rebuilt chalet, a plaque now recalls that it once was a 'refuge du Maquis'. On August 1, 1943, some 15 Italian customs officers garrisoned in a hotel at Novel, above Saint-Gingolph, were attacked during the night by a group of Francs Tireurs et Partisans (FTP). One Italian was killed and the resisters captured one light machine gun, six rifles, 30 grenades and a quantity of ammunition. Four days later, a party of the Armée Secrète (AS) ambushed 50 Italians at Reposoir, above Cluses, as they returned from a search operation in the mountains. One Italian was killed and seven wounded. The clandestine press celebrated these two successes: 'At Novel and Reposoir, patriots showed us the way. France will live, France will win'.** *Right:* **This is the ambush site on the D4, one kilometre past Reposoir, as it appears today.**

1943: UNIFICATION

In January 1943, thanks to Moulin's efforts over the last few months, Henri Frénay of the 'Combat' organisation, Emmanuel d'Astier de la Vigerie of 'Libération Sud', and Jean-Pierre Lévy of 'Franc Tireur' — the same three organisations which had founded the Armée Secrète the previous October — agreed to amalgamate their organisations into a larger movement; thus the 'Mouvements Unis de Résistance' (MUR) was created. Capitalising on the existing organisations, the MUR covered the whole of the ex-Zone Libre and was soon efficiently organised on a regional basis.

Late in January, another de Gaulle envoy, Pierre Brossolette, returned to France with the task of getting the groups in northern France to accept central direction for their military activities. He was joined one month later by Forest F. Yeo-Thomas (code-name 'Hippocampe') of the SOE and André Dewavrin ('Passy'), the chief of the BCRA. They found that all groups were now ready to accept orders from a military staff directed by de Gaulle in accordance with Allied strategy and a co-ordinating committee was set up in the northern zone.

Having been extracted from France in February to report, Jean Moulin parachuted back in March for mission 'Rex'. Still as de Gaulle's representative, he now had the job of setting up a national committee that was to co-ordinate the Resistance movements throughout France. A risky meeting was held on April 12 with Moulin, Delestraint, Brossolette, Yeo-Thomas and Dewavrin and the representatives of the five main movements of the Resistance in northern France. The work done by Brossolette over the preceding weeks had paved the way and it turned out that everyone — bar the Front National — agreed with the Armée Secrète plan to wait for the planned invasion before engaging in all-out fighting. Roger Ginsburger ('Villon'), the Front National's representative, said that it was already in action, killing over 500 Germans a month (a much exaggerated claim), and that it would not stop its activist policy. (Basically, the communist leadership of the movement was not prepared to ditch a policy which brought in many new recruits.)

While Brossolette, Yeo-Thomas and Dewavrin were picked up by air in mid-April, Moulin remained in France to concentrate on his main aim of setting up a national committee. After more discussions, he succeeded in bringing together all the eight main resistance movements, the six political parties (most of them still a shadow of their former selves after the defeat of 1940) and the two main trade unions. The 'Conseil National de la Résistance' (CNR) held its first meeting in a flat in Paris, at 48 Rue du Four, on May 27 at which Moulin was appointed its president. The CNR recognised de Gaulle as the trustee of the interests of the French nation. However, contesting de Gaulle's authority inside France, its left wing soon started building up the CNR into a body which could eventually supplant de Gaulle's London committee and assume power when the moment of the liberation came.

On the night of August 26/27, 1943, 1,000 German troops detrained at Bonneville and started to fan out to occupy the Arve valley as far as Chamonix. In the meantime, 1,200 others detrained at Annecy. From September 8 — the day of the Italian capitulation — the Germans took over, arresting Italian soldiers and customs officials (this picture was taken in Grande Rue at Thonon) though over 600 escaped to Switzerland. Compared to the laxity of the Italians the difference was immediately felt and by the end of October the Germans had placed 250 individuals under arrest. Of them, 40 Jews were soon sent to Drancy prior to deportation to Germany, but over 200 others were kept in jail. After checks, 50 were set free. (J. Diot)

The Verbindungsstab 988 was established in Annecy as the administrative headquarters of Haute-Savoie. It was subordinated to HVS 590 (Hauptverbindungsstab, Chief Liaison Staff) of Generalmajor Otto von Goeldel in Lyons. *Left:* **At the beginning of Rue du Pâquier, these signs pointed as well to the soldiers club (Soldatenheim), the workshop of Kraftfahr-Park 668, the shelters (Unterkunft) and the filling station (Tankstelle). The building in the background is the local casino — razed in the 1950s, rebuilt and demolished a second time to preserve this magnificent view** *(right)* **of the Veyrier mountains.**

Meanwhile, the Germans were not idle and they struck at the Resistance with thousands of arrests. In March, they hit the 'Ceux de la Résistance' and 'Alliance' groups, and in April 'Combat'. In June, they neutralised a major SOE circuit, 'Prosper', and the same month succeeded in breaking up the newly-created command structure of the Resistance by arresting the commander of the underground army, Général Delestraint, caught in the Metro in Paris on June 9. Moulin himself was arrested near Lyons on June 21 and was so badly treated by his SD interrogators that he succumbed within a fortnight. Delestraint was tried and sent to Dachau where he was executed in April 1945.

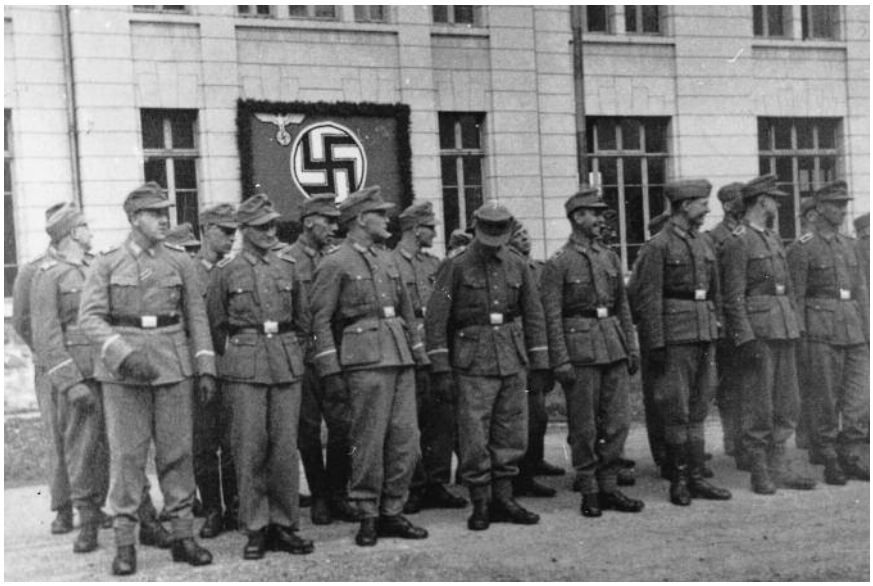
Brossolette was sent to France with Yeo-Thomas to check how much damage had been done by the spate of arrests and to rebuild as much of the command structure as was possible. They arrived back by Lysander on September 19 and for over a month worked to tie up contacts. Yeo-Thomas returned to England in November but flying weather closed in and Brossolette had to resort to escape by sea from Brittany. He set sail on a fishing boat on February 2 but the ship was wrecked and he regained the shore only to be arrested by the Germans. Not willing to talk under torture, on March 22, 1944 he jumped to his death from the balcony of 84 Avenue Foch, the SD building in Paris where he was being tortured.

As the struggle intensified, attempts on the lives of both Germans and collaborators increased. Though the communists and the groups under their control were particularly zealous, all the resistance groups carried out summary executions of collaborators and informers. 'If the traitors continue to get away with their crimes, they will be joined by other cowards and opportunists', said the editorial of the clandestine *Combat.* In 1944, the resisters were to strike at the top, eliminating Philippe Henriot, Secretary for Information and Propaganda of Vichy, and one of the leaders of the collaborationist circles. A powerful propagandist, whose broadcasts were listened to by many, he was condemned to death by the CNR. Posing as members of the Milice, a squad of resisters surprised him at his home in Paris on the morning of June 28 and shot him, his execution being widely hailed in the underground press.

Troops were quartered on Rue Marc Leroux in the Fins school — still a school today.

In September 1943, all three battalions of SS-Polizei-Regiment Todt were posted to France, the III. Bataillon being sent to Haute-Savoie, the 9. Kompanie taking quarters in Annemasse, the 10. at Cluses and the 12. at Thonon. From March 1944, the regiment was sent to Slovenia, being replaced by SS-Polizei-Regiment 19. Of its I. Bataillon, the 13. Kompanie took quarters in Annecy in the Saint-François school on the Rue de la Gare, *(above)*, the 2. Kompanie in the Hôtel Pax at Annemasse *(below)*, and the 3. Kompanie in the technical school for clock-makers on Avenue Charles Poncet in Cluses *(bottom left)*.

Left: **Hauptmann Guth, the commander of the 2. Kompanie of SS-Polizei-Regiment 19, hands out awards to some of his men in front of the Hôtel Pax, Rue de la Gare. The 'Kreuz des Südens', the Southern Cross badge, visible on his left sleeve, was worn by certain police units from the cities of Hamburg, Bremen and Lübeck to commemorate the former police forces of German East Africa.** *Right:* **This Sunday comparison belies the normal heavy traffic in the centre of town. (E. Déturche)**



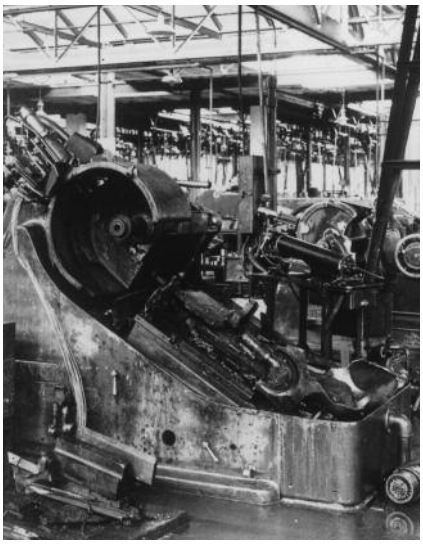
Among those arrested by the Germans in Annecy on September 13 was Vallette d'Osia, the commander of the Armée Secrète. He was badly beaten, transported to Lyons and on September 18 put on a north-bound train. A few kilometres before reaching Dijon, his two guards having fallen asleep, he broke the window and jumped the train. Although he was handcuffed and suffering from a bad head wound, he managed to get away and reached Chambertin where locals freed him from his chains. The following day, he reached Antheuil where friends took care of him. In October, he returned to Haute-Savoie but then crossed over into Switzerland for a time to recuperate before returning to France. He was picked up to be taken to England in February 1944. He is seen here *(right)* **at the Morette Resistance Cemetery in the autumn of 1944.**

Left: **At about 7 p.m. on October 28, 1943, 20 armed men rushed into the railway yard at Annemasse and sent two steam engines crashing down into the turntable pit, sealing 19 engines in their sheds. On January 13, 1944, a five-man unit led by 'Pan-Pan' (Laurent Mégevand) stole into the railway station at Annecy as dense fog covered the whole area. They set explosive charges on the boilers of five steam engines and got away unscathed. The charges exploded between 7.15 and 7.50 p.m., disabling the five locomotives. That same morning, men of the 'Simon' group boarded a train near La Roche-sur-Foron whereupon the driver and passengers were ordered off and the train sent off on its own in the direction of Bonneville. At Saint-Pierre, it crashed into another train and three carriages were derailed, blocking the line for 16 hours. On the 17th, two locomotives were disabled by explosions in La Roche, two others again in the Annemasse railway station in March, and a train derailed in the Evires tunnel in May.** *Right:* **Another train was derailed near Evires in June.**

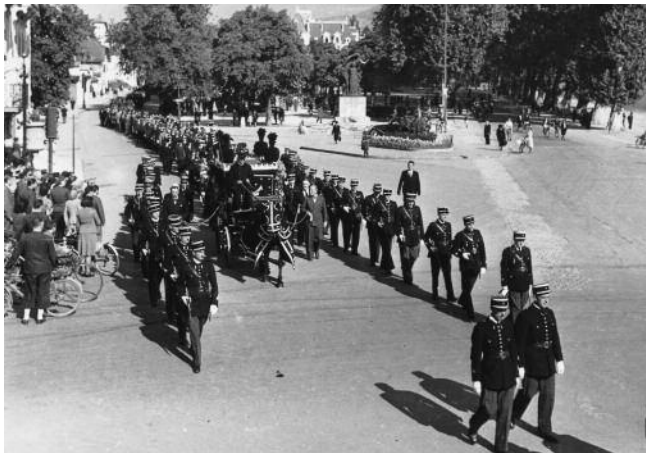
Of all the Resistance operations, the most sustained — and certainly the most effective — was that directed against the railways. Bridges were blown, tracks were cut, locomotives were disabled in their sheds, and supply and troop trains derailed. In October 1943, in a comprehensive report on the situation, Generalfeldmarschall von Rundstedt pointed out that sabotage against the railways had greatly accelerated from mid-1943. Attributing this sharp increase to the massive supply of arms and explosives parachuted to the Resistance, he reported that there had been 534 acts of rail sabotage in September alone compared to a monthly average of 130 for the first half of the year. In order to repair the damage done more quickly, over 20,000 German railway workers were brought in to supplement French manpower between February and June 1944.

As to the 'massive supply of arms and explosives' referred to by von Rundstedt, the number of missions from England and North Africa (from the spring of 1943 a few were from Algiers) had sharply increased. Over 600 sorties had been flown to France in 1943 (compared to 93 in 1942) and the tonnage of stores dropped amounted to 586 tons. In addition, 102 agents had been brought to France, while 200 had been picked up.

A Swiss company, Schmid-Roost-Oerlikon, had established a ball-bearing factory in Annecy and in mid-1943, when Haute-Savoie was occupied by the Italians, the Germans ordered 400,000 ball bearings from SRO. The steel to feed the machines was supplied by Germany and production began. Well aware of the progress of the order, the Armée Secrète decided to intervene. However, on their first attempt on November 8 the detonator failed to function. Three days later, 31 B-24s of the US Fifteenth Air Force raided the factory, dropping 90 tons of bombs, but with no success, hitting instead many houses, killing ten civilians and wounding 20 others. On November 13, the AS decided to try again and at about 9 p.m. an assault party overpowered the factory watchmen and placed charges on five electrical transformers. These exploded some two hours later, destroying three units. However, one device had failed to go off so next morning some of the squad, claiming to be police, boldly returned to replace it, thus destroying a fourth transformer. The factory was completely out of action for three days and production was curtailed for two weeks. The same AS team returned again on the evening of November 24, cutting a hole through the fence and placing charges on 13 machine tools. These exploded shortly after 8 p.m., six machines being destroyed and seven badly damaged *(right).* **The factory output was now down to 40 per cent. Following this new attack, squads from the GMR (Groupe Mobile de Réserve — police units formed in November 1942 with the specific task of combatting 'terrorist' movements), were detailed to guard the factory day and night. Nevertheless, the resisters tried again on the nights of December 15/16 and 20/21, but shots were exchanged and the saboteurs had to withdraw. On the night of May 9/10, 1944, the RAF attacked the works and the factory was mostly destroyed. At the same time, over 100 houses were damaged, killing 14 civilians, wounding 30. (R. Poirson)**



The railway station nearby was also hit. On Avenue Bouvard, only the small house on the left survived. The Germans then made plans to move the ball-bearing factory into a one-kilometre long railway tunnel under the Semnoz mountain but, although some work was started, the liberation came before the underground factory was operational. (R. Poirson)



Commanding a company of gendarmes in Annecy, Capitaine Paul Vallet demonstrated much zeal in tracking down Maquis camps so it was decided to eliminate him. On October 1, François Servant ('Simon') lured him into a trap. Capitaine Vallet received a phone call from Thorens, 20 kilometres away, allegedly from one of his men who said he had just been wounded. Vallet immediately set out alone in his car. *Left:* **At about 11 a.m., when some two kilometres from Thorens, he was stopped here by a group of men. He carried out a brief conversation with them before he was suddenly mown down by a burst of sub-machine gun fire. His body was moved to a small track by the side of the road (off to the right, by the shadow).** *Right:* **His funeral ceremony was held in Annecy on October 4 and this picture was taken on what is now the Place de la Libération. The Resistance groups frequently took justice into their own hands. 'Kill the traitors, kill those who denounce, those who have aided the enemy', wrote *Défense de la France.* 'Kill the miliciens because they have deliberately chosen the road of treason.' Alphonse, a member of the Milice, was shot at Thonon on September 3, 1943; Maria, an Italian, was killed in her house at Saint-André-de-Boëge on November 14; and on the 21st, Marguerite and Estelle were taken from a bus between Annemasse and Annecy and executed. Then on the 22nd, two brothers, Georges and Marcel, both members of the Milice, were shot in Cercier. Another suspect, Henri, was shot dead in Rue Royale at Annecy on the 23rd. In all, about 270 individuals, allegedly collaborators or informers, were summarily killed in Haute-Savoie alone before the liberation.**

AUX PATRIOTES DE LA RÉSISTANCE
VICTIMES DES HORDES ALLEMANDES
DALTOSO ATTILIO 23 ANS DE TALANGE (MOSELLE)
DANTAND ALBERT 25 ANS DE THONON
GUERIN PIERRE 22 ANS DE VILLEDIEU-LES-POÊLES (MANCHE)
LONG PIERRE 20 ANS DE THONON
THOMAS PIERRE 20 ANS DE LYON
FUSILLÉS ICI MÊME LE 17 DÉCEMBRE 1943
BACHMANN ANDRÉ 20 ANS DE CHATENUT S/MOSELLE
BARRIER ANDRÉ 24 ANS DE GIRAUMONT (M.ET.M)
MAITRE ROBERT 25 ANS DE LA ROCHELLE
MOUTHON GILBERT 24 ANS DE THONON
MORTS AU COMBAT DE BERNEX LE 17 DÉCEMBRE 1943
LA COMMUNE DE BERNEX RECONNAISSANTE
17 DÉCEMBRE 1944

Early on the morning of December 17, 1943, the SS-Polizei attacked a camp in the hills over Bernex. Four members of the FTP were killed during the firefight which lasted throughout the morning. Five more were taken prisoner and marched to the village where they were shot in front of this wall *(left),* **villagers having been summoned to witness the 'execution of communists'.** *Above:* **The gutted remains of the chalet destroyed by the Germans still stand beside the road to Creuzat.**

Late on Christmas Day 1943, 60 men of 9. Kompanie, SS-Polizei-Regiment Todt, started out from Annemasse in five lorries and reached Habère-Lullin, a village in the mountains 15 kilometres south of Thonon. Soon after midnight they surprised around 50 men and women enjoying a dance in a manor house in spite of the curfew (which proscribed any gatherings after dark). Many of the revellers were hiding from the forced draft and as they tried to escape, two were immediately shot dead. Demanding to be told where the weapons were hidden (the SS were seemingly searching for arms dropped on the night of August 19/20 at the Moises pass), the Germans began executing the men one by one. In the end, with 22 dead lying on the floor, they splashed the bodies with fuel and set the building ablaze. They then packed the remaining 17 men and 9 women into lorries and departed, killing Eugène Duret outside in the street. The women were soon released but eight of the men were deported to Germany, six of them never to return. On New Year's Eve, Odette Bresset, one of the women who had been in the house that night, was abducted with her husband René by the FTP and both were executed for allegedly having informed the Germans about the dance. However, it is doubtful that they were responsible as Guy Cazeaux, a French agent of the Gestapo, admitted his guilt after his arrest in 1947. He was tried and sentenced to death. *Right:* **The ruin of the burned-out manor house still stands at Habère-Lullin.**

On January 10, 1944, a ten-man squad from the FTP surprised a group of French detectives as they were eating their evening meal in the Hôtel du Sapeur in Bonneville. They captured eight, seized their weapons and removed files from their rooms. The FTP then took the prisoners to their camp at Lignières near Petit-Bornand, 12 kilometres south of Bonneville. On January 17, they sent one detective back to negotiate their release in exchange for five members of the FTP who were being held in prison. The detective was sent on to Vichy to discuss the matter at the highest level but nothing more was heard of him. When the time allowed was up — somewhere near the end of January — the FTP summarily shot their seven remaining prisoners. On April 2, a villager led the Milice to where their grave had been dug and the bodies were exhumed. The chalet itself *(right)* **was burned down. In turn, this informer was shot by the FTP on May 8. A similar event occured a few kilometres away in La Roche-sur-Foron. At midday on January 14, 20 FTP assaulted the Hôtel Mino where another group of detectives were having lunch. Shots were exchanged, and some of the police managed to escape but the FTP managed to capture ten officers and take them to their camp above Saint-Laurent, five kilometres to the east. They released two of them whom they knew to have recently submitted a favourable report after a local inquiry into the Resistance, but they shot the other eight about January 25. One detective tried to escape but he was finished off some distance away and his body was thrown into the River Borne. One of the FTP group, Jacques Lelièvre, was arrested by the GMR on February 26 and, painfully interrogated, he finally gave in. On March 4 he pointed out the spot where the bodies had been buried, and seven were exhumed. On March 31, the Borne river gave up the eighth body near a bridge at Saint-Pierre. (M. Germain)**

Découverte en Haute-Savoie d'une fosse contenant les restes des victimes des terroristes. Le châlet où furent détenus les policiers avant leur exécution.

Vichy harped on the killings in Haute-Savoie, implicating the communists and drawing a comparison with the Katyn massacre in Poland (see *After the Battle* No. 92), pointing out that 'the countries are not the same but men and methods are'. *Left:* **The original caption for this picture was 'the chalet where the policemen were detained before their execution'.** *Right:* **After the war, a new road was built from Saint-Laurent to Orange which now runs right in front of the burned-out ruin. We succeeded in taking this comparison though the place is now much overgrown.**

Left: **On March 7, the funeral ceremony of the policemen killed at Saint-Laurent was held in Annecy. The coffins lay in state in front of the Hôtel de Ville as Philippe Henriot, Secretary for Information and Propaganda for Vichy, gave the address. The Préfet, Pierre Marion, and Colonel Georges Lelong, chief of the police forces in Haute-Savoie, also attended. Note that a statue of Jeanne d'Arc has been erected in the square since Pétain visited Annecy late in 1941 (see page 5). The statue was inaugurated in May 1943 but removed after the war.** *Right:* **On April 6, another ceremony was held in Annecy, this time of the seven policemen killed at Lignières. Gendarmes and Gardes carry the flag-draped coffins flanked by an honour guard of Gardes. Préfet Marion and Colonel Lelong march behind. (Archives Départementales)**

On the afternoon of January 18, 1944, a squad under 'Simon' started out in two cars to ambush traffic on the N203 between Annecy and La Roche-sur-Foron. At about 3 p.m., as they approached Hautebise, they met two lorries coming from Annecy. They immediately stopped and opened fire, smashing the windscreen of the leading vehicle. While shots were exchanged with the Germans who exited the lorry, the other vehicle kept on going. 'Simon' sent one car after it with Pierre Tortel, Paul Robin and Maurice Rabut aboard. In the chase, Tortel fired burst after burst from his French FM 24/29 light machine gun until the lorry came to a halt at Daudens, its tyres punctured. The two German customs officers on board, Hermann Ehlert and Richard Pfeiffer, held out for a while but were finally killed. The squad then pulled back as more Germans arrived from Annecy to search the area, one house near the site of the ambush being burned down in reprisal. On January 23, after a mix-up at a road-block established by the Garde, 'Simon' was badly wounded. Taken to hospital in Annecy, he was soon identified as 'Lieutenant Simon' whereupon the French authorities posted armed guards at the hospital. The AS quickly started to assemble a force to rescue him but, just minutes before they were due to go in, lorries loaded with SS-Polizei arrived and the Germans took over. The rescue plan was canceled and the men started for Thorens but at Mercier, five kilometres north of Annecy, their two cars ran headlong into a German column. A gunfight erupted, three men escaped but ten were captured, eight of whom were executed in the yard of the Galbert barracks later that night. One man escaped and the Germans mistook the tenth for one of the hostages taken at Mercier and he was deported to Germany. In June 1946, a mass grave was discovered in the barracks yard and it was found to contain the bodies of 11 men, among them the eight members of the 'Simon' group. As to 'Lieutenant Simon' — François Servant — himself, on the night of January 24/25 he was removed from the hospital by men claiming to be 'German police'. He was never seen again and to this day his body has never been found.

Pierre Tortel, one of the few men in the 'Simon' group to survive the war (he escaped from the Mercier ambush), took Jean Paul to the place at Daudens where the German lorry was brought to a halt. The two Germans, Ehlert and Pfeiffer, are now buried in the German Military Cemetery at Dagneux, 20 kilometres north-east of Lyons.

The scene of the encounter at Mercier as it appears today, looking towards the approaching German column. No one knows what happened to 'Simon' but a symbolic grave exists to his memory in the Morette Resistance Cemetery (see page 54).

Late on January 28, resisters abducted a German customs officer on a train standing at the station near Saint-Jeoire, 20 kilometres east of Annemasse. (He was later shot.) The SS-Polizei quickly set up a road-block with a lorry on the D26 just north of the village *(left)*. At about 10 p.m., a Citroën approached and slipped past whereupon shots were exchanged, stopping the car some 200 metres down the road. The three passengers, members of the AS, had all been wounded but they managed to escape in the darkness. (One German at the road-block had been killed.) Reaching Pouilly, Robert Desbiolles sought shelter in a house where Jean Carrier, another resister, had been hiding for the last two months. Meanwhile, Marcel Clavel crossed a wood and reached Quincy where he was hidden by villagers. The third man, Alphonse Pasquier, was badly wounded and hid in a wood. Hoping to make contact with Clavel and Pasquier, Carrier set out for the wrecked car but saw only Germans. He opened fire, killing one. Three lorries bringing more SS-Polizei then arrived from Annemasse whereupon the Germans attacked Pouilly and captured and shot both Desbiolles and Carrier and nine other villagers. Nine houses were burned down in reprisal. *Right:* These two have been rebuilt, that on the left being the one in which Desbiolles and Carrier were shot. Pasquier died of his wounds in the woods but Clavel remained hidden and cared for until he recovered.

Left: **By the end of 1943, the Vichy Prime Minister, Pierre Laval, had to accept some extremists into his government and Joseph Darnand, the leader of the Milice, was soon named Secretary for the Maintenance of Order. Here, Darnand (right) is seen with SS-Obergruppenführer Carl-Albrecht Oberg, the Chief of the SS and Police in France. In Haute-Savoie, the prefect had listed 175 attacks by the Resistance in October and November 1943 and he soon reported that the department was almost in a state of civil war. As a result, Darnand decided to hit back hard. In January, he charged Colonel Georges Lelong with maintaining order in Haute-Savoie assigning him sizeable force to do the job. In all, Lelong was soon to have about 3,000 Gendarmes, Gardes, GMR and Milicemen to re-establish Vichy order. However, Darnand made clear that the department had to be pacified by March 10 or the Germans would themselves intervene. On January 28, Lelong established a blanket curfew from 8 p.m. to 6 a.m in Haute-Savoie. The use of cars and lorries had to have special authorisation and motorcycles and bicycles were banned. In a proclamation on January 31, he informed the inhabitants that 'the outburst of terrorist attacks in your department and the increasing insecurity that reigned here has led the government to decide its purification and pacification. Only French forces will participate in these operations.'** *Right:* **From then on, he launched round-ups in towns; raids against Resistance camps (here at Féternes, see opposite), and sweep searches in the countryside.**

DE GAULLE OR GIRAUD?

In North Africa, the new High Commissioner, Général Giraud, had begun the rearming of the French army which had been agreed with the Allies. In January 1943, a note from Roosevelt announced the delivery of 1,000 first-line aircraft and matériel required for the creation of three armoured and eight infantry divisions. However, Giraud turned out not to be of the calibre required. With due reverence to Pétain, for several weeks he held out for the continuation of the established order and it was not until March that he finally agreed to the annulment of Vichy legislation. This did not help to reassure the Resistance movement who were still worried (following the Darlan deal) that the Americans would not seek an alternative to Vichy and opposition to Giraud remained strong.

On February 22, 1944, the Milice besieged a farm above Fessy (which lies 15 kilometres north of Annemasse) in which 12 men of the FTP had been surprised early in the morning. There was much snow and it was very cold. In the battle which continued throughout the day, the farm was set on fire, six FTP were killed and a seventh, Ange Angeli, captured but later executed. Five men remained hidden under the floor of the burning house and escaped when the Miliciens left at about 6 p.m. The Milice lost five men killed and six wounded. A memorial has since been erected on the site of the farm, the walls having been restored in their 'ruined' state.

The British were by now steadily leaning towards de Gaulle as someone with whom serious business could be done, yet most Americans, from Roosevelt downwards, remained distrustful. They favoured the integration of the Free French forces into Giraud's command, with de Gaulle being either subordinated or cast aside. In May, on a visit to Washington, Churchill agreed that the best thing to do with de Gaulle was to drop him and he cabled to London accordingly but the Cabinet replied at once, pressing him to reconsider his decision.

Pressed by the Americans and the British, the two French generals compromised. De Gaulle came to Algiers on May 30 and a 'Comité Français de Libération Nationale' or CFLN (French Committee of National Liberation) was established on June 3. It amalgamated de Gaulle's London organisation with leading personalities in North Africa and leaders of the Resistance in France. In spite of Giraud's opposition (and overriding American objections), the CFLN soon dismissed leading Vichy supporters in North Africa. In November, the committee was broadened to include more members from the resistance movements, and Giraud and several of his supporters were excluded. The CFLN then ordered the arrest of Vichyists (to whom both the Americans and the British had already given assurances of immunity), which annoyed Roosevelt and Churchill to such an extent that the question of eliminating de Gaulle arose again.

In February 1944, the CFLN announced the formation of the French Forces of the Interior, the FFI. Time was getting short, for the date for the invasion of France was

Having learnt that an FTP group was based in Féternes, eight kilometres to the east of Thonon, the French authorities mounted an operation to round them up. Early on February 20, the Milice and GMR surrounded the village; among those captured was Maurice Flandin-Granget, the battalion commander of the FTP. (Association des Glières)

approaching, but at least a certain degree of consolidation of the regional and departmental staffs was achieved. Yet the ORA groups considered themselves subordinated to Giraud and they were not totally integrated until the end of June. As for the communist-dominated FTP, they tended to look on the FFI as nothing more than a co-ordination body. Nevertheless, the FFI army could soon claim a strength of 300,000 resistance soldiers and in early June, de Gaulle appointed Général Pierre Koenig, his representative at SHAEF, as the commander of the FFI.

The Americans, even more than the British, expected to set up some sort of Allied Military Government in France after the invasion but de Gaulle and his followers made no secret of the fact that they were planning to form their own administration. They held the Vichy government as illegitimate and subservient to Germany and refused to see Pétain or Laval treated as leniently as Marshal Pietro Badoglio in Italy or Darlan in North Africa. As to the future government of France, the principle upon which de Gaulle relied was for the 18 Commissaires de la République, designated by the CFLN on advice of the Resistance, to administer the regions (each region consisting of six to eight departments). By the end of May, all arrangements had been made to put this plan into force, and the commissaires (and the departmental préfets under them) were all in place, ready to occupy the seats of power on the demise of the Vichy administration.

In the hamlet of Vougron, the Milice surprised René Bernicot in this house and shot him. Today, a plaque on the wall remembers his execution. At Flon, another nearby hamlet, André Martin was wounded in a gun battle and he was later captured by following a trail of blood on the snow. He was taken back to the village and finished off that afternoon. Another plaque recalls his death. (Association des Glières)

The Giraud — de Gaulle dispute faded away during the spring, as Giraud's position weakened, and in May, though Roosevelt had just reiterated his opposition to dealing with the French committee on any issue save military matters, the CFLN ruled that it should henceforth be styled the Provisional Government of the French Republic. Nevertheless, it was not before July, after de Gaulle had visited France and been enthusiastically welcomed, that the Americans finally accepted that de Gaulle rather than Vichy spoke with the true voice of France. The American and British governments then acknowledged the CFLN as the de facto authority for the civil administration of France, albeit that formal recognition was withheld until October 1944.

The Milice finally left the area taking 20 men away to Thonon. Maurice Flandin-Granget died there under torture on February 21. Julien Mouille was put on trial and executed on March 20 and five men were deported to Germany. The Milice lost one man killed, Martin Sainte, and one wounded, Roger Dechy, who died the following day. (Association des Glières)

GLIÈRES

In the summer of 1943, the commander of the Armée Secrète in Haute-Savoie, Jean Vallette d'Osia, sent a report to London pointing out the military potentialities of the area. His account was read with interest but other reports by SOE agents were not so enthusiastic so SOE decided to send a mission to survey the Jura and Savoie area. Code-named 'Musc', the team comprised Richard H. Heslop of the SOE ('Xavier') and Jean Rosenthal ('Cantinier') who was a Frenchman with the BCRA. Dropped south of Mâcon by a Whitley in the early hours of September 9, they spent three weeks surveying the region before being picked up by a Hudson on the night of October 16/17. The report they made was so encouraging — 2,350 men ready to fight with a superb morale — that they were immediately sent back with fresh orders to further the local organisation. On the night of the 18th/19th, they were landed near Lons-le-Saunier and they soon met with the new area commander of the AS, Henri Petit ('Romans'), as Vallette d'Osia had been arrested. Contacts were made and soon six sites suitable for air-drops had been selected.

Of all the Resistance operations carried out in France during the war, the epic events on the high valley at Glières early in 1944 remain one of its finest battle honours. On February 20, 'Tom' — the commander at Glières — formed up his men in front of the Tricolour and took their oath to 'live free or die'. This picture was taken by Raymond Périllat, one of the resisters on the plateau, when Maurice Anjot ('Bayart') took over command. The monument built in 1973 to commemorate the Glières epic (see centre pages) lies just behind the photographer's position.

Left: **On January 30, 120 resisters marched up to Glières and established themselves in unoccupied chalets used in the summer by herdsmen. These men of the 'Allobroges' section took up quarters in the Outan chalets situated in the northern corner of the plateau; in the centre, in white pullover, the section commander, André Macé.** *Right:* **Most of the chalets on the plateau were burned down by the Germans on March 29 and 30. We took this comparison by the side of the chalet rebuilt on the ruins of the one that had once been 'Tom''s command post. (Association des Glières)**

At the end of January, the commander of the Armée Secrète in Haute-Savoie, Henri Petit, whose nom de guerre was 'Romans', ordered Théodose Morel — 'Tom' — to take charge on the plateau. Lieutenant Morel *(left)* **was an experienced soldier. In June 1940, commanding a section of the 27ème Bataillon de Chasseurs Alpins (BCA) on the Alpine front, he had routed a whole company of Italian soldiers for which exploit he was awarded the Légion d'Honneur.** *Right:* **Though his forces on Glières were still far too few to hold the plateau in the face of an all-out attack (he considered that he would need at least 1,000 men for that), nevertheless 'Tom' deployed the men at his disposal for all-round defence. (Association des Glières)**

From the end of January, Colonel Lelong started to deploy his forces in Haute-Savoie to 'pacify' the department. Serge-Henri Moreau, a local artist, drew this picture *(left)* **of a road-block established by the Milice to control the main crossroads in the centre of Thorens. For the Glières operation, the Milice cordoned off the plateau from Petit-Bornand in the north to Dingy in the south, its commander, Jean de Vaugelas, establishing his command post in the Hôtel de Savoie in Thorens. Moreau's drawing illustrated a book he published in 1945,** ***Thorens, berceau du Maquis.*** *Right:* **The same scene in 1999.**

On the morning of March 26, the Milice started reconnoitering the terrain toward the Enclave pass. *Left:* **These Miliciens have set up quarters at Usillon, two kilometres east of Thorens.** *Right:* **We found the same house now somewhat altered since wartime days. (Association des Glières)**

On January 27, 1944, Churchill presided over a meeting of the War Cabinet which discussed the help to be given to the French Resistance. Invited was Emmanuel d'Astier de la Vigerie, de Gaulle's Commissioner for the Interior. Churchill was enthusiastic about the idea of creating a situation in the French Alps similar to that existing in Yugoslavia: 'Brave and desperate men could cause the most acute embarrassment to the enemy and it was right that we should do all in our power to foster and stimulate so valuable an aid to Allied strategy'. On January 30, a radio message from the BCRA informed the AS of Haute-Savoie that a large quantity of weapons would be delivered to them in February and March.

Fearing that increasing police activity might make the recovery of the air-drops difficult, the AS command decided to concentrate them all in one place, a 1400-metre-high plateau at Glières. As access to Glières was difficult, even more so in winter because of the snow, it was not going to be possible to wait until the 'go' message was received from the BBC; the reception team would have to remain on the plateau, waiting for the air-drop. To remove the supplies quickly, it would be necessary to have at least 100 men on the plateau, plus more in the valleys below. To assemble so many resistance fighters in one place violated all the basic guerrilla principles but Petit and Heslop accepted the risk, convinced that it would only be for a short period of time.

At the end of January, afraid that the stricter security measures established by Colonel Georges Lelong, the Vichy police chief in Haute-Savoie, (i.e. the blanket curfew and restricted use of cars and bicycles) would seriously handicap the deployment of the air-drop reception group, Petit immediately ordered them to Glières. He detailed his ADC, Théodose Morel (nom de guerre 'Tom'), to take charge on the plateau. On the night of January 30/31, lorries took 120 men from various camps to the Essert bridge in the Borne valley. From there, they started the journey up to the plateau. After a three-hour climb in deep snow, they reached the top and took shelter in unoccupied chalets used in the summer by herdsmen.

As the time for the Allied landing in France approached, those who shared the gaullist view — that the main aim of the Resistance was to convince the Allies that they were a strong force — knew that guerrilla tactics and acts of sabotages were, in themselves, not enough. In Haute-Savoie, Rosenthal was one of them. He was not alone in cherishing the idea of an alpine 'redoubt' acting as a second front in the rear of the Germans and on February 4, Charles Gaillard ('Triangle'), the ADC of the Armée Secrète national military delegate, sent an urgent message to London. He asked for a signal to be broadcast by the BBC calling Haute-Savoie to insurrection. Although it appears that none of the local or regional commanders of the AS had been consulted before the appeal was made, surprisingly, French and British services in London let it through. On February 6, Maurice Schumann, the BBC spokesman for the Free French, broadcast the dramatic message: 'SOS, SOS, Savoyards, Savoyards, the Maquis of Haute-Savoie, the French front of which the uniformless soldiers are ready to fight for you and die in the middle of you, calls you to help . . . Armed men join the Maquis . . . Workers go on strike . . . Patriots of Savoie sabotage railways, roads and factories'. It was a call to national insurrection and those who heard the broadcast in London were astonished. A transcript was shown to Vallette d'Osia, who had just arrived from France, and he made his disagreement clear: in his view, a general mobilisation of the AS several months ahead of D-Day would only result in heavy losses. The following day, February 7, having been duly admonished, Schumann made an about face: 'The Germans intend to catch you to destroy you. The proper response is to withdraw and disperse and then reform to harass the enemy'.

By then, however, Petit and Heslop had left to lead the AS in the Ain area and Humbert Clair ('Navant') took over command in Haute-Savoie while Rosenthal remained as delegate of the inter-Allied military mission.

Also on February 7, Lelong had sent a 200-strong party of Gardes and Groupe Mobile de Réserve (the GMR was a police force set up in November 1942 specially to counter terrorism) to search the Petit-Bornand area for several policemen abducted by the FTP. One police squad surprised a party loading supplies on sledges at Essert and the three men they captured were taken to Annecy. Next, Lelong decided to send reconnaissance parties to the plateau and from the 10th he began assembling men from the Garde and GMR in the Borne valley to the east of Glières, and in the Fillière valley to the south-west (no German forces were yet involved). He called a meeting of the unit commanders and it was decided to start on the 12th. To avoid spilling the blood of fellow Frenchmen, the platoon commander of the Garde, Capitaine Guy Jung, sent a messenger on ahead to warn the men on the plateau of his planned route of advance. Early next morning, a battle group started out from Essert. However, the messenger never reached the Resistance HQ and at about 9.45 a.m., Jung's platoon walked into an ambush. Shots were exchanged, his men pulled back and Lelong's initiative ended in failure. Four men had been killed, including Capitaine Jung, and six wounded, while three men had been captured by the resisters who also recovered weapons, ammunition and grenades.

Lelong released the three men arrested at Essert and on February 14 he met Maurice Anjot, Clair's second in command, in Annecy. Lelong was impressed by his patriotism and a new meeting was agreed, this time with Clair himself attending. However, this new meeting, held on the night of February 16/17, ended in a deadlock when Lelong argued that the AS should join the police and turn against the FTP in order to get rid of these 'bandits', but Anjot and Clair refused to discuss the matter. (As proved by a German telegram of February 21, the SD knew all about these negotiations.)

In the meantime, more men had joined Glières, among them 56 Spaniards. (Having fought on the republican side in the civil war, many Spaniards had fled to France following Franco's victory. Vichy had recruited them into labour companies but, fearful of being sent to Germany, many had joined the Maquis.) Two groups of the FTP also came over in the early days of March. To 'Tom', no political considerations were acceptable, it was simply the case that the French Army was holding Glières against the Germans and these men should integrate with his force. However, the leader of one of the groups, Marcel Lamouille, made clear that he did not consider himself subordinate to 'Tom'. For that, he said, he would have to have an order from his superior. To this end, a runner was sent down to the valley and he returned on March 10 with a clear answer: the FTP must withdraw for the FTP leadership believed that the assembly of large forces on Glières was a mistake. The half-hearted FTP group was nevertheless persuaded to stay for the time being and these

members took positions above Petit-Bornand as part of Compagnie 'Humbert', the other group being added to Compagnie 'Forestier'.

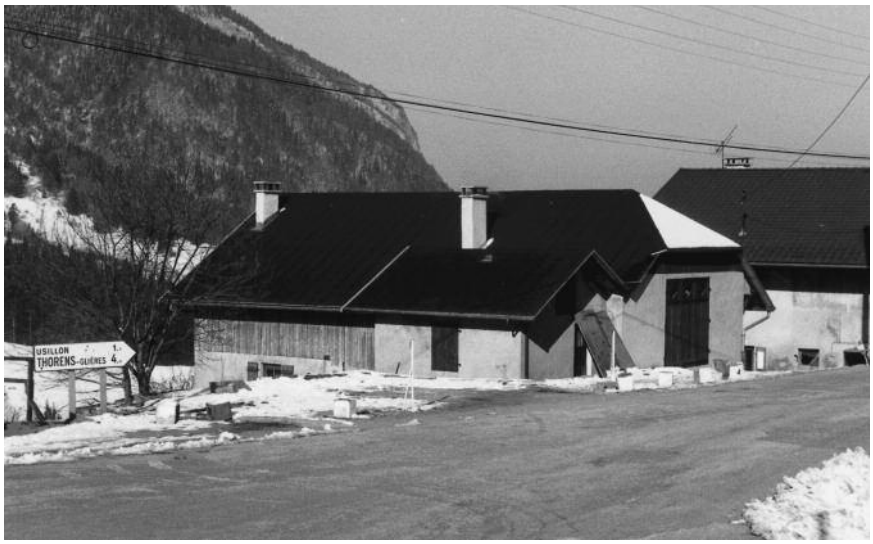
On March 2, Rosenthal enthusiastically reported to London that 'the plateau is impregnable . . . We confidently wait for the police and the Miliciens, those mercenaries of the enemy' and he reiterated the mood of the resisters to get to grips with 'les Boches'. Two days later, Clair proposed that Glières should be evacuated but Rosenthal said they should consult with the BCRA first. Soon, he declared that the response was 'We consider Glières as a bridgehead. We'll drop a battalion' but it had never been question in London of committing airborne forces to its defence and this message was probably a forgery. Nevertheless, on March 9, Rosenthal went to Glières and gave 'Tom' his new orders: to hold the plateau as a bridgehead for a battalion of paratroopers. By then, 'Tom' had assembled nearly 300 men but still far too few to hold Glières in case of an all-out attack; for that he considered that he would need at least 1,000 men.

But for the snow, the bringing of supplies up to the plateau had not been too difficult at first for the Gardes left the parties alone as they crossed the Essert bridge. However, pressed by the Secretary for the Maintenance of Order, Joseph Darnand, Lelong changed the deployment of his forces and the Gardes, whose lack of drive was evident, were replaced by elements from the GMR. Lelong then sent in another reconnaissance and on March 9 and 10, patrols converged from the north, south-west, and south. One man from the Milice was killed and several of the GMR were captured by the resisters.

At Essert, the GMR now strictly controlled the bridge and so 'Tom' decided to attack Entremont where two platoons — about 60 men — of the GMR 'Aquitaine' were garrisoned. On the evening of March 9 he led a force of over 100 men down to the valley and at 2 a.m. next morning he attacked. While shots were exchanged here and there in the village, 'Tom' accosted the unit commander, Commandant Grégoire Lefèbvre, in front of his CP in the Hôtel de France. A brief scuffle followed in which Lefèbvre drew a pistol and shot 'Tom' dead. He himself was then shot down before a brief firefight led to the GMR surrendering.

Shocked at the death of their leader, the Resistance party returned to the plateau, taking his body with them. They also took around 60 prisoners, as well as weapons, ammunition, clothing and blankets. On March 13, 'Tom', Théodose Morel, was ceremoniously laid to rest on the plateau.

This picture of the Milice assembling was taken further up the valley at Vernet. They are on the road that now climbs up to Glières. (Association des Glières)



Serge-Henri Moreau drew this somewhat dramatic picture of the ambush at the Enclave pass of March 26 which cost the Milice two men killed and two wounded.

As to the air-drops, a first one took place on the night of February 13/14 when four aircraft dropped some 50 containers — about five tons of supplies — including some Bren guns and Lee-Enfield rifles. Two aircraft dropped three more tons of supplies on the night of March 4/5. By now, there were plenty of small arms to go round but the lack of machine guns and mortars was an increasing worry. The promised major air-drop materialised on the night of March 10/11 when 17 aircraft dropped 200 containers between 11 p.m. and 2.30 a.m.; a total of over 20 tons. (Some accounts state a dozen more aircraft had come from Algiers, and that the total was nearer 40 tons.)

The force on Glières was not sufficient to manhandle so large an amount of weapons and in fact the size of the drop was somewhat of an embarrassment as the AS command was now faced with a dilemma: should they evacuate the plateau — a sound military decision — and so abandon the desperatly needed weapons and ammunition, or should they fight to try to keep them. Anjot and Clair met in Annecy with Rosenthal and the leader of the MUR in Haute-Savoie, Georges Guidollet. All but Rosenthal were

On the night of March 9/10, 'Tom' led over 100 men down from Glières [1] to attack Entremont [2] where two platoons of the GMR were garrisoned. He was killed there, in front of the Hôtel de France [3] *(left)*. Today a plaque on the wall recalls his death and that of Georges Decour, another of his men killed the same night in the village. Jean Paul has annotated a present-day photograph *(right)* taken from a helicopter to illustrate the action. (Association des Glières)

On March 13, Morel and Decour were ceremoniously borne to Glières where they were buried alongside the Tricolour flag that flew on the plateau. After the war, both were moved to the Morette Resistance Cemetery. (R. Poirson)

of the opinion that Glières must be evacuated but he was so adamant that the Resistance must demonstrate its power that the others finally fell in line. Anjot ('Bayart'), an ex-capitaine of the 27ème BCA, was then chosen to take over command on the plateau and, dodging GMR patrols, he reached Glières from Entremont on March 18.

Meanwhile, the Germans were drawing up their plans for dealing with the situation and on March 8 they sent a reconnaissance aircraft to survey the plateau. Four days later, three Heinkel He 111s from Dijon attacked Glières, dropping 100 15kg bombs but the efficiency of the bombing against small targets in the snow was nil.

From the beginning, Lelong had strongly disagreed that German forces should be committed against Glières and on February 21 he had even refused to meet Luftwaffe officers sent to Annecy to co-ordinate air operations against the plateau. The raid was subsequently launched without his consent at which point he asked to be relieved of his command. Darnand refused to accept his resignation and sent one of his loyal assistants, Max Knipping, to Annecy to keep an eye on him.

Early on March 16, Lelong ordered Jean de Vaugelas to reorganise his Milice forces of some 800 men and relieve the half-hearted Gendarmes, Gardes and GMR that were cordoning off Glières. From then on, patrols of the Milice started reconnoitering, from the south and south-west on the 20th, from the north on the 22nd and from the east on the 24th. A number of resisters were surprised and killed for the loss of a few Miliciens.

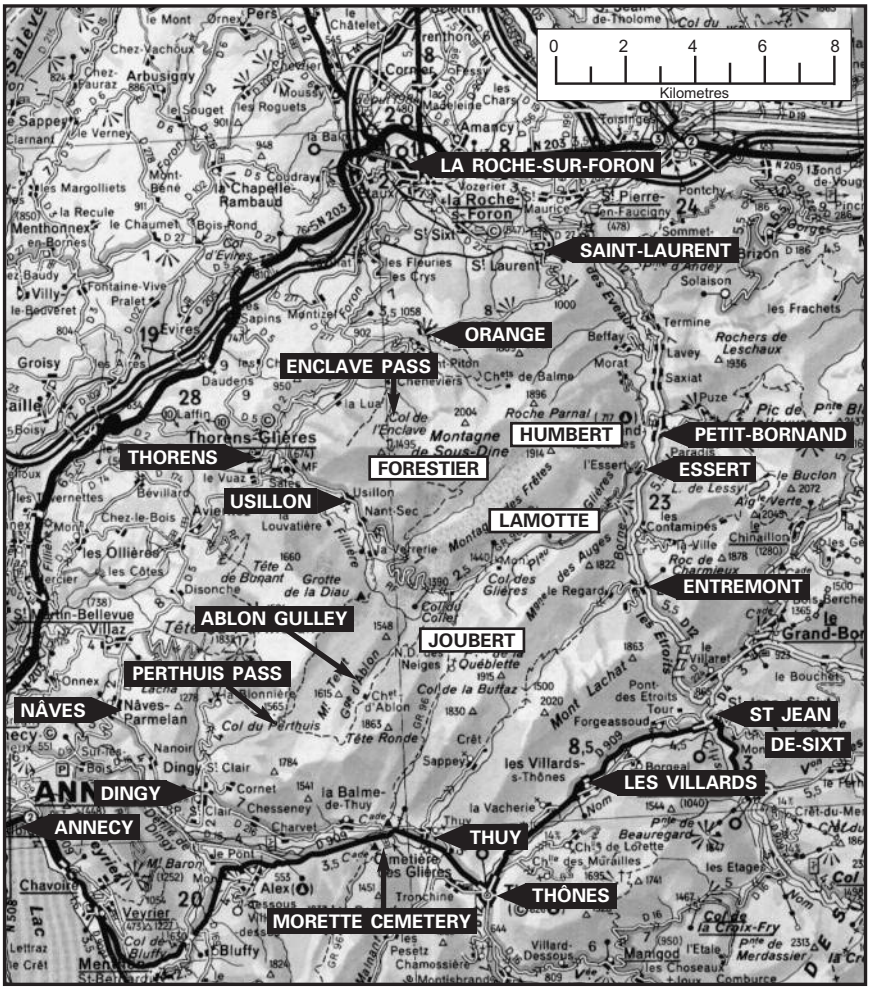
Glières — then and now. A major air-drop took place on the night of March 10/11 comprising 200 containers, quite a large number for the small force on the plateau to manhandle. The following morning, Lucien Cotterlaz-Rannard posed by one of the containers. The Germans caught him as he escaped and he was shot at Essert on April 1. (R. Poirson)

On March 22, an officer of the Milice, Raoul Dagostini, sent two priests to the plateau with a last appeal to 'Vallette d'Osia' (he was thought to be in command at Glières) to discuss the surrender of his men while any 'bandits' were to be arrested and court-martialled. Anjot replied: 'It is sad that a Frenchman acts as you do. I have got a mission, it is not to me to negotiate'.

On Rosenthal's insistence, three more groups of the AS had joined Glières by mid-March and by the 25th Anjot possessed a force of some 465 men, deployed as follows: in the west, two sections of Compagnie 'Forestier' (Louis Morel); in the south, three sections of Compagnie 'Joubert' (Louis Jourdan); in the east, four sections of Compagnie 'Lamotte' (Jacques Lalande); and in the north, four sections of Compagnie 'Humbert' (Henri Onimus). All the company commanders were ex-officers or NCOs of the 27ème BCA. On March 24, Anjot sent an urgent signal to Clair asking for a new air-drop, this time of food, clothes, medicine and ammunition. He also pressed Clair to send more men to the plateau: 'There are Maquis doing nothing, why not involve them?'.

From mid-March, after the failure of Vichy to eradicate Glières, the Germans took over. Following a first meeting with Lelong in Annecy attended by one of his officers (Oberst Franz Schwehr, the commander of Reserve-Gebirgsjäger-Regiment 1), Generalleutnant Karl Pflaum, the commander of the 157. Reserve-Gebirgs-Division, arrived from Grenoble with more of his staff on the morning of March 20. Having inspected the sector around the plateau, he planned to attack Glières on the 25th with three battle groups. However, information gained from captured resisters had painted a false picture of the strength of the forces on Glières, and a German telegram dated March 21 reported 900 men on the plateau, of whom 200 were Spanish veterans from the International Brigade. The telegram also pointed out that discipline was strict and that alcohol was forbidden.

Pflaum entrusted the operation codenamed 'Korporal' to Oberst Schwehr and the



The 465-man resistance force at Glières was deployed in four company groups. In the north, 'Humbert' under Henri Onimus; 'Lamotte' in the east under Jacques Lalande; in the south 'Joubert' led by Louis Jourdan, with 'Forestier' under Louis Morel in the west.

The Germans took over the operation to reduce Glières from mid-March. Three battle groups of the 157. Reserve-Gebirgs-Division were deployed. Here, the Reserve-Gebirgs-Artillerie-Regiment 7 arrives with its artillery. Two 150mms were positioned at Thorens while a dozen 75mm guns were distributed around the plateau. (R. Poirson)

three battle groups deployed to their allocated sectors. The Reserve-Gebirgsjäger-Bataillon I/98 started from Annecy (where its three companies had been barracked since January) to the Fier valley, south of Glières, and Hauptmann Ludwig Stöckl established his command post at Thuy. Arriving by rail from the Maurienne valley, the Reserve-Gebirgsjäger-Bataillon II/98 detrained at La Roche and was trucked to the lower Borne valley where Hauptmann Rudolf Geyer set up his CP in Petit-Bornand. From Briançon, and also detraining in La Roche, came the Reserve-Gebirgsjäger-Bataillon 99 which was transported in the upper Borne valley where Hauptmann Hans Schneider established his CP at Entremont. Elements of a fourth battalion, the Reserve-Gebirgsjäger-Bataillon 100 of Hauptmann Johann Kunstmann, were held in reserve. Though the operation was to be carried out by an army unit, it basically remained a police operation and a 'Jagdkommando' from the SD was attached to each of the groups. Also, Pflaum had moved four batteries of artillery from his Reserve-Gebirgs-Artillerie-Regiment 7 from Albertville and Grenoble. These comprised two 150mm guns and a dozen 75mm guns, which were arrayed around Glières.

Schwehr established his personal command post at Thônes where Pflaum joined him on the 24th. Because of sabotage to the rail line by the Resistance in Maurienne, elements of the Reserve-Gebirgsjäger-Bataillon II/98 were late in arriving so the operation had to be postponed to the 28th. Meanwhile, some of the GMR prisoners held on the plateau had escaped and, when questioned by the SD, had talked of around 800 men on the plateau, well-armed, with machine-gun pits and fortified chalets, and that an air-drop of AA guns was expected, as well as the anticipated arrival of 300 Canadian paratroopers.

This gun is being hauled up the mountain above Dingy to cover the southern side of the Glières stronghold. Once the 75mm had been positioned as planned on the ridge of the 1120-metre-high Lacha mountain, and its ammunition brought up, the Jägers posed for a symbolic picture. In the background lie the Tournette (left) and Dents de Lanfon (right) mountains. (R. Poirson)

Knowing that the resisters would probably try to pull out, the Germans entrusted the Milice with surrounding the plateau on its northern, western and southern sides and on March 25, Darnand came to Annecy to confer with Pflaum. Plans of action were

Left: **On the right, just behind the man leading the column, the V-shaped valley is the Perthuis pass through which many of the resistance men on Glières were later to escape the cordon deployed by the Germans and the Milice.** *Right:* **Just as the Jägers did 55 years ago, Marie-Françoise poses for the photographer beneath the 1832-metre-high Parmelan mountain.**

Left: **From mid-March, the Luftwaffe repeatedly strafed and bombed Glières, setting fire to several of the chalets. This picture showing one of them burning was taken at Métralière, at the southern end of the plateau.** *Right:* **The chalet has since been rebuilt and the road to Glières now climbs up just behind the photographer's position. (Association des Glières)**

discussed and he insisted that all Resistance personnel captured should be handed over to the French. He then inspected the sector around the plateau with SS-Hauptsturmführer Paul Jeewe of the SD.

On March 25, the German artillery opened up but no observation was possible on the plateau which was 800 metres above the guns. In fact, the shelling was quite inaccurate. The Luftwaffe had resumed its attack on the afternoon of March 16 when a Focke-Wulf 190 strafed and bombed the plateau. Another returned on March 17, five more on March 23, and several others on March 25 and 26. They set fire to several of the chalets and destroyed a major ammunition dump, killing one man and wounding others.

On the morning of March 26, a Milice detachment advanced from Thorens toward the Enclave pass. Shots were exchanged for several hours and the police finally fell back after having had two men killed and two wounded. In the afternoon, after further artillery shelling, a strong German reconnaissance group assaulted the north-eastern side. The resisters held them at bay but, learning of this attack, Anjot decided at 10 p.m. to pull his whole force back on Compagnie 'Joubert' in the southern corner and then to disperse as he knew that his defences would be outflanked in the end.

Schwehr planned to launch his main attack on the 28th using the three battle groups together but the swiftness of the French withdrawal in the early hours of March 27 surprised him. It was nearly midday before he gave the order to attack and the Jägers did not reach the plateau until late afternoon. They took control of the whole of Glières on the 28th and finally swept it thoroughly on the 29th and 30th, setting fire to the remaining chalets. A large number of weapons and a quantity of ammunition was recovered though a major stockpile was found partly blown up (seemingly after having been hit during one of the air attacks). The booty was packed on mules and brought down to Essert.

As to the resisters, small groups of men had filtered away in every direction. A few were killed, others were captured, some being executed summarily on the spot, but the majority succeeded in dodging the cordon manned by the Germans and the Milice. In the north, led by Georges Buchet, the 30 men of the 'Verdun' section which had held the Freux pass reached Balme before filtering down a cutting to Orange. Also from Balme, those of the 'Bayard' section tried to escape westwards though many were captured at La Luaz. In the south-west, a group of 30 from Compagnie 'Forestier' reached Thorens on the morning of the 27th and made good their escape even though the Milice was strong in the sector. On the 28th, another group of escapers was surprised by

Totally surrounded and outnumbered, late on March 26 'Bayart' reluctantly made the decision to evacuate the plateau that night. Soon after the Resistance fighters had withdrawn, the Germans reached the plateau and cleared it thoroughly over the next two days. This picture, taken not far from the chalet seen burning in the top picture, shows a battle group of Jägers posing with the Pointe de Puvat in the background. (Association des Glières)

the Milice near the Flies bridge and four men were killed, among them Jacques de Griffolet, Anjot's ADC. In the south, 25 men or so of Compagnie 'Joubert' struggled up the Ablon gully in the deep snow, reaching the Perthuis pass by dawn on the 27th. Some then got across the Fier river and up again on the other side, but others were killed by the Germans near the Morette bridge.

By March 31, the Germans considered Operation 'Korporal' finished and the 157. Reserve-Gebirgs-Division was switched to another one against 'terrorists', this time south of the Jura mountains. In a telegram, SS-Obersturmbannführer Werner Knab, the commander of the SD in south-eastern France (who had come to Annecy on March 26), voiced his disappointment that the resisters had not fought it out to the end at Glières. He reported that their losses were much lower than expected, and that at least 400 men had escaped, a figure that turned the operation into a failure. On the other hand, he expressed his satisfaction as to the amount of weaponry recovered: 122 light machine guns, 722 rifles, 1,011 Sten guns, 160 revolvers, 300 grenades, 100 kilos of explosive and more than 130,000 rounds of ammunition.

The Resistance had lost 21 men killed (11 by the Germans and 10 by the Milice or the GMR); and by April 1, 226 men had been captured, of whom 43 were summarily executed (38 by the Germans and 5 by the Milice). The 183 prisoners remaining were moved to Annecy but the Germans refused to hand 100 prisoners over to Vichy who wanted them. German losses were small. There is no mention of any men killed in Knab's reports but the OKW war diary reported three men dead. A later report by the Military Governor of France put the number at 14.

A telegram from Knab on March 31 stated that the Germans wanted all 'the terrorists to pay for their acts with their life'. Vichy was not so demanding and Lelong wanted to court-martial those men suspected of murder and to send the others to the STO. In the end, Knab maliciously agreed but he pressed Lelong into making sure that any man sent to the court was certain to get a death sentence. The others were to be immediately dispatched to Germany in such a way that 'Lelong would think that they were sent to the STO'. That afternoon, another telegram made clear that the 140 men or so then detained by the Germans were 'destined for the concentration camps'.

Some of those who had escaped from Glières were arrested later in April. Henri Onimus was picked up as he boarded a train in Annecy on the 7th (he escaped from jail ten days later), two men were caught at Cruseilles on the 10th, and Jacques Lalande in a

On March 28, Philippe Henriot, the Secretary for Information and Propaganda for Vichy, came to Annecy where he recorded an insulting speech to be broadcast the next day. He said nothing about the Germans intervening but described the capitulation of 'those bands which had terrorised the country for months and in whom the gullible and the crooks claimed to see French patriots.' He continued: 'I saw them, French and foreigners, AS and FTP, all mixed up. I saw them coming down, without weapons . . . The legend is dead.' (Association de Glières)

Left: **Moreau drew Henriot when he visited Thorens on March 29.** *Right:* **Jean Paul was delighted to find the same spot in Noyers, a small hamlet two kilometres north-east of Thorens, and to discover that the artist had actually depicted a real location.**

On the 28th, a group of escapees were surprised by the Milice in the sector north-east of Thorens and four of their number were killed. *Left:* **Moreau drew this sad illustration of two Spaniards killed at Mont. Today, a memorial has been erected 100 metres away beside the Flies bridge on the exact spot where Lieutenant Jacques de Griffolet, Anjot's ADC, was killed.**

Maurice Anjot with two other Frenchmen and three Spaniards had succeeded in reaching Nâves, ten kilometres north-east of Annecy, but a squad of Germans ambushed his group, killing them all. This second memorial stands where they fell.

street in Annecy on the 27th. Of those of the Resistance still in their hands, the Germans liquidated 15 on April 13. On the 28th, after a month of torture, they shot Pierre Bastian, another ex-officer of the 27ème BCA, who had been in charge of logistics at Glières, and with him, Jacques Lalande. Meanwhile, the Vichy prosecutors had filed their cases and on May 4, 11 men were court-martialled. Nine were sentenced to death, five being immediately executed at Annecy by a GMR firing squad. On May 6, 45 prisoners were sent to Germany, most ending up in camps; 14 did not return.

Thus, the dream of an alpine fortress holding out until D-Day was a bitter failure yet the psychological and political impact of the operation was far greater than its military contribution. The BBC broadcast heartening if exaggerated reports (14 days of battle, five German battalions involved, some 12,000 men, of whom 400 had been killed...), bringing a spotlight on an outnumbered but indomitable unit of the Resistance — a French army fighting the Germans behind their lines. Glières gave a decisive impulse to the spirit of defiance in France and in that respect it was a complete success.

At the same time that he was trying to handle the situation at Glières, Colonel Lelong convened two courts-martial, one at Annecy, the other at Thonon. Of the 11 men tried in Annecy, eight were sentenced to death and shot by a squad from the GMR on February 22, and of the eight tried at Thonon, six men from the FTP were executed on February 26. The Annecy court-martial sentenced more members of the AS and FTP to death, five being executed on March 8, five on March 20, one on April 8 and five on May 4. And on March 15, the Germans discreetly despatched seven men, mostly FTP. Their bodies were discovered after the liberation in a mass grave in the yard of the Saint-François school at Annecy where the SS-Polizei had been quartered. Five of the resisters executed by Vichy now lie in the military plot of the local cemetery together with three men murdered by the Germans in the Saint-François school *Left:* **Roger Bouvret and Noël Bastien executed by the GMR on February 22.** *Right:* **The grave of René Dayne summarily shot by the SS-Polizei.**

'AND WE'LL COME FROM THE SHADOW'

By 1944, the Resistance in France had reached both a measure of unity and a substantial strength. It infested hundreds of square kilometres of territory through which all the German reinforcements, ammunition and supplies would have to pass to reach the front. At any point, the Resistance could cut rail or road links and harrass convoys heading west. Its capabilities to undermine the German power behind the lines was of immense value, yet the Allies still regarded the Resistance with suspicion. In fact, the officers who drew up the 'Overlord' invasion plans had been trained in a tradition that distrusted irregular methods of warfare and, indeed, despised them. Fearing that control of the Resistance would only be partial (some even wondered whether odd groups might not turn the weapons dropped by the Allies against them), Allied planners tended to be cautious on precisely what role the Resistance could play in assisting the cross-Channel assault. What was mooted was a preliminary increase in the tempo of sabotage, then, simultaneously with the assault, an all-out attack on roads, railways and telephone lines and the harassing of German troops by any available means.

To achieve these aims, there was no doubt that the underground army of the Resistance was woefully underarmed and of the 300,000 FFI soldiers available in March, only 10 per cent possessed weapons. The main reason for this shortfall was a general lack of priority given to this matter by the Allies which had led to only a few aircraft being made available to supply the Resistance. By the beginning of 1944, there were still only 23 Halifaxes assigned to dropping supplies for the whole of northern and north-western Europe. In January, the CFLN appealed formally to the Allied Chiefs-of-Staff for an increase in supplies to French Resistance. Considering the demand on the 19th, the Chiefs-of-Staff rejected any weakening of the Bomber Command effort over Germany and their only offer was some 60 additionnal sorties a month by the Stirlings of No. 38 (Transport) Group. Another attempt, less formal but more effective, was a direct approach to Churchill. De Gaulle's Commissioner for the Interior, Emmanuel d'Astier de la Vigerie, pleaded the cause at a committee meeting held on the afternoon of January 27 and, with Churchill's backing, it was finally accepted that, though Bomber Command's main effort would still be directed against Germany, drops to the Maquis were to have first priority in its subsidiary operations. Bad weather prevented much activity in February, but March was a busy month and April and May busier still. Air-supply sorties improved from 107 in the last quarter of 1943 to 759 in the first of 1944 and the tonnage increased from 139 to 938.

In March, SHAEF issued a comprehensive directive to its Special Force Headquarters on the use of the Resistance in support of 'Overlord'. During 1943, the Special Operations branch of the American Office of Strategic Services (OSS) had commenced

At 6.15 p.m. on April 26, six German customs officers on bicycles were patrolling this road — the N202 — between Cluses and Taninges when they came across two cyclists near Châtillon. They asked the men for their identity cards — they were in fact members of Compagnie 93-13 of the FTP — whereupon the latter suddenly opened up with pistols, killing two of the Germans, Ulrich Schirm and Gottfried Adolf (Adolf held the customs services rank of Zollsekretär and Schirm the one of Zollassistent). Abandoning their bicycles, the two resisters ran to the cover of the nearby forest as the four other Germans in the patrol fired at them. This is the site of the encounter, looking in the direction from where the Germans approached. The woods are out of the picture to the right.

There were about 40 air-drops to the Resistance in Haute-Savoie, all but five before D-Day. Most involved one to three aircraft (between 10 to 45 containers), and only two were major operations, the one on March 10/11 and August 1, 1944, both on Glières. *Left:* **Empty containers lying in the spring snow at Glières. Nevertheless, the resisters were badly lacking arms and they repeatedly attacked the German and the French security forces to seize their weapons. In about 70 attacks from September 1943 to August 1944, the Resistance netted some 700 weapons in Haute-Savoie alone, mainly rifles and revolvers, but also a few sub-machine guns. The GMR and the Gendarmes were the main providers, often giving up their weapons without a fight. In July 1944, an FTP commando attacked the Gendarmerie at Thonon and relieved the Gendarmes of 25 rifles and 30 revolvers.** *Right:* **At Bonneville today, the Musée Haut-Savoyard de la Résistance created by the ANACR (Association Nationale des Anciens Combattants de la Résistance), an FFI veteran association, displays a very interesting collection of weaponry genuinely used by the Resistance, some of French Army origin; some captured from the Italians or the Germans and others supplied by the Allies. Also, several containers dropped in the area can be seen on display, both the C-type (a single cylinder nearly six feet long) and the H-type (five separate cylindrical cells held together by metal rods).**

On the night of June 5/6, 1944, the BBC broadcast messages calling on the Resistance movements in the R1 area (northern Alps and Jura) to action: 'Le premier accroc coûte 200 francs' (sabotage of railways); 'La voix humaine est morte' (sabotage of telecommunications); 'Qu'un sang impur abreuve nos sillons' (guerrilla action), etc. In Haute-Savoie, the Resistance immediately went into action: railway lines were sabotaged at Groisy and Evires on June 13; German garrisons were attacked, such as at Bellegarde on the 8th and Megève on the 16th; and vehicles and convoys were ambushed like the attack at Balme between Cluses and Sallanches on the 24th. The Germans reacted swiftly and they raided villages where resisters were suspected, burning down houses and shooting any perpetrators: at Frontenex on the 8th, Bonne and Valleiry on the 9th, Eloise on the 14th, Puisots on the 15th, Etercy on the 26th, etc. In over 15 security operations during June in Haute-Savoie, some 30 resisters and 35 civilians were put to death while 25 Germans and 10 members of the French security forces were killed by the Resistance. These pictures showing a squad of the SS-Polizei in action were found after the liberation in the Hôtel Pax, their former base at Annemasse. They may well have been taken during the major operation launched in the Chablais in May when the Germans cordoned off the whole sector from Thonon to the Swiss border for three days. Seven men were shot and over 100 men and women arrested, of whom 53 were deported to Germany. (E. Déturche)

operating in France, gradually amalgamating with the British SOE, a process which had been completed by January 1944. The single agency was titled Special Force Headquarters (SFHQ) and made a part of the Operations Division of SHAEF. A tripartite staff — American, British and French — was established and plans were made to employ the Resistance as one component of the Allied invasion force. A plan was developed for cutting railway lines (code-named 'Plan Vert') and another to interfere with road traffic ('Plan Tortue'). It was quickly apparent that effective disruption of road transport would require a large amount of explosives, more than could be delivered in time, and instead the plan was converted into a project for delaying German road movements through guerrilla action. These operations were supplemented by a project to sever electricity supply ('Plan Bleu') and another to cut the telecommunication trunk lines ('Plan Violet'). Since each of the plans had been drawn up on a regional basis, and each of the Resistance regions had its own code arrangements, it was possible to issue specific calls to action in any location in direct support of the landings. The now famous Verlaine couplet was one of these messages: 'les sanglots longs des violons de l'automne' was the warning message to the railway-cutting teams of the 'Ventriloquist' circuit of SOE, and the following line 'bercent mon coeur d'une langueur monotone' told them to go into action that night.

SHAEF decided that it would be preferable to obtain the maximum amount of chaos behind the enemy lines at the moment of the landing so it was planned to set all sabotage in motion at once on D-Day. The messages ordering the Resistance to stand by were broadcast on June 1 and 2 and the action messages sent out during the night of June 5/6.

The Resistance promptly went into action and its enthusiasm overtook all the elaborately phased plans. The rail-cutting program was extraordinarily effective with hundreds of individual operations carried out. On D+1, 26 main lines were out of service, all disrupted by multiple breaks, and at the end of June, a total of 486 rail cuts were reported for the month. One notable success in the efforts aimed at slowing road traffic occurred

At the beginning of July, the Germans launched another major search operation, this time in the Bauges mountain massif to the south of Annecy. The whole area, nearly 1,000 square kilometres, was cordoned off and early on July 4, German columns started up the roads leading to the high ground. All the villages along the way were searched and suspected houses put to the torch. Although most of the Resistance men managed to escape, seven were shot at Glapigny and another at Lapierre. These pictures show the same SS-Polizei unit during one of their sweeps in Haute-Savoie. *Centre:* **The police national emblem can be seen on the cap of this individual.** *Left:* **A machine gun squad pauses on the top of a ridge: their weapon is a MG 26(t), a somewhat obsolete gun of Czech origin.** *Right:* **The SS-Polizei patrol returns to base. (E. Déturche)**

Left: **Led by Louis Morel ('Forestier'), 100 FFI openly marched through the village of Thorens on July 14, with four buglers in the lead, to lay wreaths at the WW1 memorial and on the graves of those resisters killed while escaping from Glières the previous March. The movement had made no secret of their parade but there was no reaction from either the Vichy authorities or the Germans.** *Right:* **This is the main street in Thorens — Glières is 14 kilometres away. (Association des Glières)**

in central France where the 2. SS-Panzer-Division was subjected to sniping and harrassment as it began its journey to the Normandy front. On June 9, having found at Tulle the bodies of 60 German soldiers executed by a group of FTP, the SS executed 99 hostages in reprisal. On the following day, June 10, allegedly in response to a Red Cross convoy which had been attacked near the village, nearly 650 civilians were indiscriminately killed at Oradour-sur-Glane (see *After the Battle* No. 1). Due to the combined efforts of the Resistance, railway sabotage and air attacks, it took a fortnight for the 2. SS-Panzer-Division to reach the battle zone.

As the Resistance called itself to action over much of the country, the mass of the French people, long smouldering in resentment at the occupiers, came forward anxious to take part, and many thousands then joined with the Maquis. As a result, the Germans soon had to divert eight of their 60-odd divisions in France to try to hold down their rear areas, and from June 10 the OKW war diary reported daily on the battle against the resisters. Day after day, it was question of 'Sabotageakte' against communications, railways and bridges, and operations against 'Banden' (gangs), the reports giving details of German retaliations: 500 'Terroristen' shot on June 11 (all the civilians murdered by the 2. SS-Panzer-Division were considered 'Terroristen'), 365 on June 13, 220 on the 15th, 600 on the 16th . . .

At midday on July 22, around 70 FTP men attacked the border village of Saint-Gingolph. The battle against some 25 German customs guards lasted for nearly two hours and by the time the FTP withdrew, some 10 Germans had been killed, among them a woman. When SS-Polizei arrived the following day, most of the villagers took flight to nearby Switzerland. Six men who remained behind, among them the village priest, Louis Rossillon, and a woman, Arlette Boch, were caught and shot, and over 50 houses and barns were burned down in reprisal. This picture was taken from the Swiss side looking across Lac Léman on July 23.

Throughout June and July, the Germans liquidated many of the 'terrorists' they had arrested. On June 15, they shot without trial 15 men of the AS and FTP at Sacconges, five kilometres south of Annecy. As the bodies were left lying where they had fallen, the locals took them into a former church at Vieugy *(left)* **before burying them. The Germans shot ten more men from the FTP at the same spot on June 18 and four men and two women near Annemasse early on July 8. On the 16th, they executed another eight men at Sacconges and a further seven men on August 10.** *Right:* **At Sacconges, a memorial has been erected beside the road to remember the deaths of the 40 resisters killed in the field beyond.**

Left: **On June 6, 1944, in Brittany, a German guarding the Rostrenen railway station was killed by the Resistance. The following afternoon, a German squad surprised some resisters in Lamprat, a hamlet north of Carhaix, and hanged eight of them the following night along the road from Carhaix to Saint-Caradec. In a throwback to medieval times the bodies remained hanging for four days as a warning to others with notices stating in French: 'This is what we will do to all those who fire on Germans'. This picture was taken in Rostrenen; Louis Briand was 18 years old.** *Right:* **Marc Brauer took the comparison.**

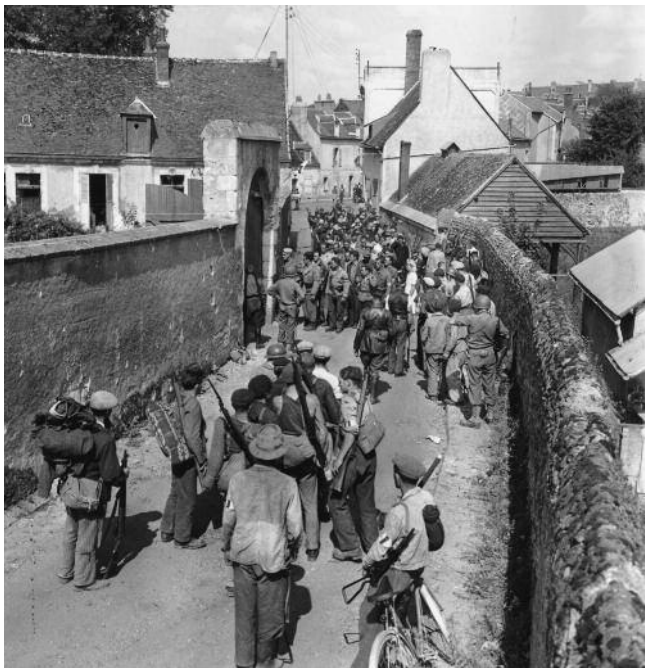
BRITTANY

The Free French of the 4ème Bataillon d'Infanterie de l'Air (known to the British as 4th French Parachute Battalion or 4th SAS Battalion) were dropped on the night of June 5/6 to pave the way for setting up two support bases, 'Dingson' near Vannes and 'Samwest' near Guingamp. More SAS parties followed and the FFI progressively built up forces around them while weapons and supplies were parachuted to them.

The Germans reacted swiftly and battles were fought at Saint Marcel on June 18 and in the Vioreau forest on June 27. However, their efforts were in vain, and by the end of July they had lost control of much of Brittany save for the major towns and the coastline. On July 29, the FFI force in Brittany of 30,000 armed and roughly-trained men were placed under command of the US Third Army. On August 3, the BBC broadcast the message ordering them to start with guerrilla activities on a large scale, and their designated commander, Colonel Albert Eon, parachuted in with four of his staff during the night of August 4/5. The following night, ten gliders landed between Vannes and Lorient to bring in Jeeps, weapons and ammunition.

As the Third Army advanced westward into Brittany, the FFI in the words of Eisenhower 'ambushed the retreating enemy, attacked isolated groups and strongpoints and protected bridges from destruction. When our armour had swept past them, they were given the task of clearing up the localities where pockets of Germans remained, and of keeping open the Allied lines of communication. They also provided our troops with invaluable assistance in supplying information of the enemy's dispositions and intentions.'

Actually, the FFI took control of many towns well before the arrival of the American forces: for example at Guingamp where 2,000 Germans had been cornered by the time Task Force A of the US VIII Corps reached the town on August 7; similarly at Saint-Brieux, Vannes, Quimper. On August 18, the FFI escorted the spearheads of the 4th Armored Division safely through minefields that covered the approaches to Nantes; the following day, they liberated Châteaudun.



On August 18, resisters assembled in Châteaudun. We pinpointed the spot in Rue Saint-François, in front of the then FTP HQ on the left. On the 19th, the FFI liberated the town. (USNA)

PARIS

In July, agitation in Paris had led Général Koenig to order the FFI to immediately cease any activities which might cause disorder and provoke a bloody back-lash from the Germans. The left wing was strong in the FFI in the city, so subordination to Koenig not really accepted and, in spite of his order, unrest developed in August. The railwaymen were on strike from August 10 and the police and the Metro from the 15th. On the night of August 18/19, placards calling for military action were posted and next morning, seemingly without overall direction, small groups of FFI occupied various ministries, the Préfecture de Police, police stations and newspaper offices, hoisting tricolour flags (see *After the Battle* No. 14). Having no longer the strength to cope with the Resistance, the German commander of Paris, Generalleutnant Dietrich von Choltitz, agreed to an understanding during the night of August 19/20 and the FFI took advantage of the lull to seize yet more public buildings, including the Ministry of the Interior and the Hôtel de Ville.

On August 20, a directive from Hitler pointed out that, 'if necessary, the fighting in and around Paris will be conducted without regard to the destruction of the city', but von Choltitz ignored the instruction and kept to the understanding previously agreed with the Resistance.

Meanwhile, alarmed by reports, somewhat exaggerated, of disorder in Paris, and fearing that these might place 'unreliable elements' of the Resistance in power, de Gaulle pressed SHAEF to send immediate help to the FFI. On August 21, he conferred with Eisenhower who reconsidered his position and next morning, the Supreme Commander made the decision that Paris could no longer be bypassed; troops had to enter the French capital to 'take over from the resistance groups'. But for the suburbs, virtually no opposition was encountered and on the morning of August 25, advance elements of the French 2ème Division Blindée reached the Hôtel de Ville, the Arc de Triomphe and the Champs Elysées.

At about 3.15 p.m. that afternoon, Generalleutnant von Choltitz signed a formal act of capitulation. Significantly, Général Philippe Leclerc, the commander of the 2ème Division Blindée, accepted his surrender in the name of the Provisional Government of France, not as representative of the Allied Supreme Commander. Giving in to pressure exerted by the FFI, he had accepted the signature of their commander, 'Rol' (Henri Tanguy), beside his own, much to the annoyance of de Gaulle.

Unable to cope with the Resistance carrying out systematic sabotage and harassment in Paris, attacking isolated German soldiers *(top),* **cutting communications, uprooting road signs, planting devices designed to puncture car tyres, etc, the German commander of Paris, Generalleutnant Dietrich von Choltitz, agreed to a truce late on the 19th.** *Above:* **On the 25th, as the leaders of the 2ème Division Blindée reached the heart of the city, this group of German soldiers surrendered to a squad of resistance soldiers.** *Below:* **The picture was taken on Avenue de l'Opéra.**

By the end of July 1944, the Germans committed strong forces, including an airborne battle group, to eradicate the Resistance army assembled on the Vercors — a mountaineous area near Grenoble. They succeeded in dislodging the defenders and killed over 600 of the Resistance, before ruthlessly sweeping the upland, blasting houses and executing 200 civilians. *Left:* **This is the ruined centre of La Chapelle, where 25 local people were shot, as it appeared in September 1944 and** *(right)* **today.**

SOUTHERN FRANCE

In June and July the Germans had to despatch part of their forces guarding southern France to Normandy forcing them concentrate the remainder along the coast. As the FFI had taken control over large sectors of the interior, the Germans had to detach even more forces to guard bridges and supply dumps and to protect their convoys. By the beginning of August, the Germans had all but lost control of southern France; only narrow strips along the Mediterranean and Atlantic coasts, the area linking the two sectors through Carcassone and Toulouse, and the Rhône valley remained in their hands. Generaloberst Johannes Blaskowitz, the German commander for southern France, then reported that the FFI had evolved into an organised army in his rear.

With the incorporation of numerous regular officers from Giraud's staff (the price to pay for excluding Giraud himself), the French leadership was weighed in the direction of military conservatism which led to the increasing favour of plans for large Maquis groups to seize control and hold particular areas. About 2,000 FFI soldiers thus assembled on the Vercors, a rugged upland southwest of Grenoble, and on July 3 the République was re-established there in the name of the CFLN. Maquis strength at the Vercors was increased to over 3,000 and on July 14, in broad daylight, 100 B-17s of the 3rd Bomb Division of the US Eighth Air Force dropped some 1,000 containers on the Vassieux dropping zone (Operation 'Cadillac'). The Vercors army was now well provided with Sten guns, rifles and ammunition, but still had few MGs and mortars.

Fearing that they might come down to harass traffic along the vital Rhône valley, the Germans moved in against the Vercors Resistance force on July 18. On the 21st, while elements of the 157. Reserve-Gebirgs-Division attacked the passes on the northern and eastern sides of the uplands, 20 gliders landed 250 Fallschirmjäger at Vassieux, right in the middle of the Vercors. Fighting raged around the village and, though they committed the whole of their reserve, the resistance fighters could not dislodge the crack paratroopers. The fate of the battle was sealed on the 23rd when another flight of 20 gliders brought in reinforcements.

As desperate call for help to Algiers had brought nothing in return, so the resistance soldiers had no option but to try to escape into the mountains. Over 600 had been killed, as well as 200 local people. As the Allies had made no effort to reinforce and hold the Vercors — they had decided against diverting forces to a military side-show several hundred kilometres from the Normandy front — inevitably, in France, there were bitter complaints that the Vercors had not received the promised help.

The Allies landed on the Riviera on August 15 and Operation 'Dragoon' proceeded as planned, without serious opposition. *Left:* **Two days later, following the liberation of Le Muy 20 kilometres west of Fréjus, the American commander of the 1st Special Task Force, Major General Robert T. Frederick, was pictured being presented with the town flag. He is thanking Séraphin Melan, the leader of the local FTP group which had played an active part in the operations to liberate the area.** *Right:* **We found that the picture was taken in front of the town hall. (USNA)**

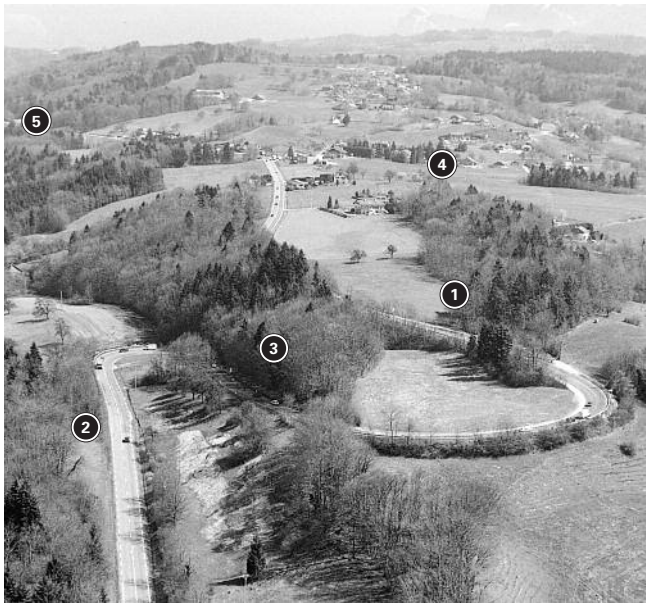
In the weeks following D-Day, the Eighth Air Force's 3rd Bomb Division flew three major supply operations to the Resistance in France: Operation 'Zebra' on June 25 (over 2,000 containers dropped), Operation 'Cadillac' on July 14 (3,700 containers), and Operation 'Buick' on August 1 (2,281 containers). By the end of September 1944, supplies delivered by air to resisters in France totalled over 10,000 tons: 5,680 by the RAF, 2,730 by the USAAF and 2,000 from the Mediterranean. As to Haute-Savoie, 'Nizier' (Joseph Lambroscini, commander of the AS in the department from May) and 'Ostier' (Georges Guidollet, leader of the MUR) attended a regional meeting of the FFI commanders at Saint-Genis-sur-Guiers, 75 kilometres east of Lyons, on July 21 and were told that London had promised a major air-drop for the sector. They decided to direct it to Glières. They had no sooner returned when they learned that the drop was scheduled for the 25th. As they had been told that it would involve up to 100 aircraft, i.e. hundreds of tons of stores, some 3,000 men were detailed to rendezvous on the plateau to handle the loads. Each man would have to make two journeys to the lorries as everything would have to be secreted away in 36 hours. Some 150 cars and trucks were assembled ready to proceed either to Usillon, west of the plateau, or Petit-Bornand, to the east. As 'Nizier' did not have enough men in the AS, he asked the FTP to supply 400 others. (Association des Glières)

On August 1, 195 Fortresses of the 3rd Bomb Division carried out Operation 'Buick', to deliver arms, munitions and explosives to four drop-zones in south-eastern France: Salornay in Saône-et-Loire, Echallon in Ain, Saisies in Savoie, and Glières in Haute-Savoie. At Glières, three waves, each of 12 B-17s, dropped about 430 containers between 2.30 and 3.30 p.m. local time. This picture was taken during the afternoon — although not visible in this picture, the pilots have lowered their undercarriages to reduce their speed. (Association des Glières)

Above left: **A long column of men and horses drag the containers to the collecting point near the burned-out remains of the chalet that had been 'Tom''s command post.** *Right:* **Symbolically, the trail they left in the summer grass now leads to the monument built to commemorate the Glières operation. In the evening, 'Grand' (André Augagneur of the FTP commanding triumvirate) claimed half of the drop for the FTP. A heated argument followed and finally, disgusted, 'Ostier' gave in for the sake of unity. It was still not enough and during the night, some of the lorries transporting weapons to AS camps were hijacked. The drop was found to comprise mainly ammunition and explosives and 'Ostier' signalled his disappointment to England: 'Were 36 aircraft necessary to deliver 50 Brens, 200 rifles and 80 Sten guns; the amount of explosive is large enough to satisfy the need of 4,000 nihilists; we urgently ask another drop with MGs and mortars'. As to the 'nihilists', 'Ostier' reported to the MUR on the 'disastrous influence of the Red Brigade, an international bunch of bandits who imposed their will on the whole of the FTP'.**

On the evening of August 3, three German aircraft (probably FW 190s) bombed Thônes *(above)*. They returned the following afternoon to drop leaflets and to bomb nearby Villards-sur-Thônes and Petit-Bornand. When Vichy protested, the Germans replied that they knew for certain that these villages had largely participated in the reception of the air-drop at Glières. The raids resulted in some damage, with 14 people killed and over 30 wounded. (Les Amis du Val de Thônes)

Promoted to the command of the FFI at the beginning of August, 'Nizier' ordered attacks against railway lines and road traffic to be intensified. One notable success occurred at Chaux-Balmont, ten kilometres south of Annecy, when 150 FFI under Louis Jourdan ('Joubert') took control of the N201 main road. On August 14 and 15 they attacked two mixed convoys comprising trucks, cars and motorcycles. In these two attacks, the Germans lost 13 men with 20 wounded. The FFI had had two men killed. *Right:* Another notable ambush occurred on the N203, at Le Plot, 15 kilometres north of Annecy. Early on August 17, the Germans in the city despatched about 80 men of SS-Polizei-Regiment 19 under Oberleutnant Rassi to Cluses where the garrison was hard-pressed. They proceeded carefully and frequent halts were made to reconnoitre the road ahead before the 15-vehicle convoy resumed its journey. At Le Plot, at the top of a steep S-bend, about 100 FFI lay in wait at position [1] but the Germans, suspecting a trap, stopped at the bottom of the hill [2] and cautiously cut across the wood between the bends [3]. Their plan foiled, the Resistance fighters opened up and a battle raged for an hour until, under combined machine-gun and mortar fire, the Frenchmen decided to withdraw [4] losing Maurice Claudin and Lucien Félisaz in the process. The Germans continued on their way but were halted again for a time by another road-block at Evires [5] and did not reach Cluses until late in the afternoon. There is no clue to the date or location of this picture *(above)* of a convoy under attack by resisters but it gives the impression of being staged. It might have been inspired by a genuine incident. (ECP Armées)



On August 14, on the eve of the landing in southern France, the BBC broadcast messages calling the Resistance forces in the R1 area to action. In Haute-Savoie, a meeting between the AS and FTP commands was held at La Roche-sur-Foron at which it was agreed to begin with the capture of the German military hospitals and customs posts. By then, the commander of the German hospital at Evian (the 4th Hospital of Kriegslazarett-Abteilung 509), Oberstleutnant Recktenwald, was feeling uneasy and had opened talks with the local FTP commander, Bernard Epelbeim. Persuaded that a force of over 5,000 resisters was surrounding the town, Recktenwald met the AS area commander, Louis Morel, on the 15th and agreed to surrender. On the morning of the 16th, the resisters took over all the buildings used by the Germans without firing a single shot and then moved on to the customs post. There, the 50 customs officers surrendered peacefully and Evian became the first town in Haute-Savoie to be liberated. In the process, the Resistance had captured over 800 Germans, most of them wounded men in the hospital. (J. Diot)

Meanwhile, in a co-ordinated action, about 500 men from the AS and the FTP had infiltrated Thonon on the night of August 15/16. The battle for the town started early next morning and some 70 customs officials fought for several hours from the various hotels they occupied in Rives, the part of the town lying by the harbour on Lac Léman. They progressivelly fell back to the château, a manor house overlooking the lake, and by midday, trapped, they surrendered to Joseph Diot ('Jean'), the commander of a battle group of the AS. *Above:* **This picture of them being marched along the Grande Rue was actually taken from nearly the same spot as the one showing Germans arresting Italian soldiers on page 13.**

Above: **As to this picture, Jean Paul located the spot in Rue Vallon** *(below).* **The resisters' hold on Thonon was expanded in the afternoon when Compagnie 93-21 of the FTP arrived from Evian and reinforced the positions deployed around the hospital compound in the southern part of the town. After some odd skirmishing during the night, the fight was resumed at dawn on the 17th. The French commanders, Louis Morel of the AS and Robert Gillet of the FTP, proposed to discuss surrender terms, to which the commander of the hospital, Major Raefler, agreed. However, as the German did not believe that the garrison at Evian had surrendered, he was driven there about midday to see for himself. Raefler signed the surrender at 4 p.m. and over 500 of his men — mostly patients in the hospital — were taken prisoner. (J. Diot)**

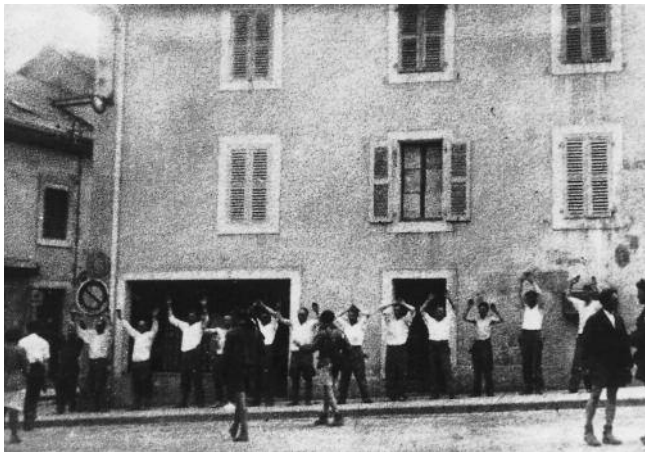
Although six Germans had been killed, the taking of Thonon had cost 19 French lives: eight AS, six FTP and five civilians. Their funeral ceremony, illustrated here in front of the Hôtel de Ville, was held on August 18. Today, numerous plaques recall the names of those killed for the liberation of Thonon: Raymond Gros killed in Rue du Funiculaire at Rives, Charles Giraud who fell in Chemin des Harpes at the corner of the Crête square, Louis Gruillot and Louis Champiot killed on Avenue Charles Buet, Jean Peilley, Claudius Plantaz and Charles Noir killed on Avenue des Allinges . . . (J. Diot)

Lying just to the east of Bellegarde, the Carnot bridge across the Rhône was of vital strategic importance. On August 15, a German car coming from Gex was shot up at the bridge by a party from the FTP, killing all four German customs officials.

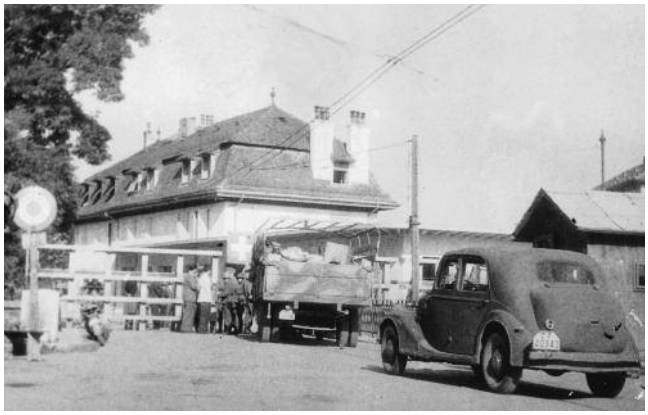
On August 16, after the Allied breakout at Avranches, the failure of the German counter-attack at Mortain, and the landings on the Riviera on the previous day, Hitler agreed to the withdrawal from France. In southern France, from the Pyrénées to the Loire, and from the Atlantic to the Alps, the German forces started retreating to the north-east whereupon the Resistance set about harrassing them on a grand scale. All by themselves, the resisters liberated south-western and central France and in so doing, they captured nearly 30,000 prisoners before the American and French troops having landed on the Riviera arrived. To these must be added the 20,000 men of Gruppe Elster withdrawing from the Atlantic coast which were surrounded south of the Loire by the FFI and finally surrendered to the Americans (see *After the Battle* No. 48).

On August 17, the Germans extracted Pétain and his government from Vichy to Belfort in eastern France. Pétain protested at his forcible evacuation and would take no part in the puppet government-in-exile established some time later in Germany at Sigmaringen.

In France, while the Provisional Government took over the offices of the principal departments of state, the designated gaullist authorities — men agreed on months before between the CFLN and the CNR — emerged from the shadows to establish themselves in the préfectures and mairies. Thanks to their own dexterity and the inefficiency of the communists, they succeeded in taking charge everywhere.



On August 16, the FFI began operations in earnest against the German customs posts along the frontier with Switzerland. At Machilly, the attack began early in the morning and some 20 men from the post surrendered sometime after midday. At Saint-Julien, attacked by the AS, and Viry, targeted by the FTP, after several hours fighting, the threat of executing those of their comrades already in the hands of the resisters quickly persuaded the German garrisons to surrender that afternoon *(left).* **At Valleiry, the attack began at 6 a.m. and the post was soon set on fire. The 20 or so men of the garrison surrendered to the 'Red Brigade' only to be shot out of hand, together with two young French women that were found with them. As the 'Red Brigade' then withdrew leaving the Carnot bridge unguarded, at 3 p.m. a German battle group of over 100 men was able to cross the river to relieve the beleaguered customs posts in Haute-Savoie. Brushing aside a party from the AS near Vulbens, killing four, they set fire to houses in the hamlet of Bloux. On reaching Valleiry, the Germans discovered the customs post burned out and a mass grave in which the locals had hastily buried the officials killed that morning. Before pulling back, they shot six men and a woman and fired 20 houses. Returning on the 17th, they wiped out a group of the Armée Secrète which had tried to stop them while more houses in the village of Chevrier were set on fire. The Carnot bridge was finally blown by the Resistance on the 19th.** *Right:* **In the centre of Saint-Julien, the now aptly-named 'Place de la Libération'.**



From August 15, the resisters, AS and FTP, set up road-blocks on the outskirts of Annemasse where over 200 Germans (120 SS-Polizei of the 2. Kompanie of SS-Polizei-Regiment 19 and 90 customs officials) were garrisoned. During the night of August 16/17, a strong party of the AS reached to Place de l'Etoile, a large square in the centre of the town, but there was no reaction from the Germans. In the early hours of the 18th, Hauptmann Guth, the commander of the SS-Polizei, ordered all the customs officials and some others, about 150 men in all, to break out and cross the border into Switzerland. *Above left:* These vehicles were pictured at the Moëllesulaz crossing point. The ZF registration plates stand for Zivilverwaltung in Frankreich — German civil administration in France. *Right:* Switzerland lies beyond the rebuilt customs post. (H. Genet)

On the morning of August 18, the resisters, by now about 300 strong, expanded their hold on Annemasse and opened fire on those buildings where Germans remained entrenched. Some time before 10 a.m., from the German HQ situated in the Hôtel Pax, an interpreter telephoned the mayor of the town, Jean Deffaugt. The mayor stressed that in his opinion the Germans had no option other than to surrender. At 10.15 a.m., with a bugler in the lead, the AS commander, Henri Genet ('Ranguin'), the FTP commander, Edmond Déturche ('Petafoy'), and M. Deffaugt went to the hotel. The German demand for free passage to Switzerland was refused and a surrender swiftly agreed whereupon 70 or so SS-Polizei were taken into custody. Only one German had been killed and their were no losses on the French side. *Left:* Two resisters drag the detested Swastika flag down the street towards the railway station. (Musée de la Résistance, Bonneville) *Right:* No trace of the tram lines on Rue du Docteur Favre today. Edmond Déturche has since died but his widow still has the flag captured by her husband in 1944.

The weapons captured from the Germans were piled up in front of the building facing the Hôtel Pax on Avenue de la Gare.

A new shop front has been added, hiding the original façade but retaining the commemorative plaque. (H. Genet)

By the early hours of August 18, about 800 resisters, mostly from the Compagnies 93-04 and 93-16 of the FTP, had deployed around Cluses and had begun infiltrating the town. According to the original caption, it was 6.30 a.m. when this picture was taken in Place du Cretet, at the eastern entrance to the town.

Meanwhile, on the other side of Cluses, from the technical school for clockmakers where they were barracked, the Germans were silently pulling out in a convoy of 15 vehicles to return to Annecy. The Frenchmen soon realised what was happening and opened up. (Musée de la Résistance, Bonneville)

Left: **Two kilometres away in the next village, Scionzier, this lorry was disabled by a bazooka in Grande Rue. It burned fiercely, the flames spreading to nearby houses. After a running battle lasting some four hours, the Germans finally reached Marnaz, five kilometres from Cluses, having lost several lorries on the way. There, another road-block barred the way so they set out across country with the remaining vehicles and some succeeded in reaching Vougy.** *Right:* **Scionzier today — now Avenue de la Libération.** *Below:* **Back in Cluses, captured lorries were assembled in front of the town hall. The machine gun on top of the driver's cab of this one is an 8mm Fiat Modello 35 captured from the Italians. (Musée de la Résistance, Bonneville)**

Left: **Few Germans from the garrison in Cluses managed to escape and 180 were captured. These prisoners were pictured in front of the town hall.** *Right:* **Today, this square is the Place Général de Gaulle. (Musée de la Résistance, Bonneville)**

End of the line for these prisoners formed up outside the shuttered jewellers' shop in Cluses' Grand Rue.

In their Berliet lorry, a group of joyous FTP poses for the photographer in Rue de l'Eglise in Scionzier. All told, more than 20 Germans and nine resisters were killed in the liberation of the Cluses area. (Musée de la Résistance, Bonneville)

By August 18, FFI groups — in all about 600 men mostly from the AS — had taken control of every exit from Annecy, and the German garrison of some 1,000 men (including those wounded in hospital) was securely bottled up. 'Nizier' hoped to capture them without a fight so for a few days a psychological battle was conducted with the assistance of Swiss radio. Disinformation was broadcast from Geneva giving the impression that the resisters had already freed the whole of Haute-Savoie and that Annecy was currently surrounded by a force 13,000-strong. *Left:* This group of resisters was pictured (after the actual liberation) in front of the Gabriel Fauré school. Obviously, this squad was mainly armed with weapons supplied by the Allies. (Archives Départementales) *Right:* Today, No. 2 Avenue de Loverchy is still a place of education.

At around 7 a.m. on August 19, led by 'Pan-Pan' (Laurent Mégevand), a force from the Resistance had taken control of the Galbert barracks in Annecy. There they waited for a counter-attack by the SS-Polizei who were known to oppose any idea of surrender. At 9 a.m. a car containing four Germans approached and at the gate 'Pan-Pan' waved the driver to stop. In a second, he recognised one of the occupants as SS-Hauptscharführer Lucien Fromes of the SD but the German was too quick and shot 'Pan-Pan' in the thigh. One of his men returned fire with a light machine gun, bringing down Fromes and killing the three other Germans in the car. In the exchange of fire, two men of the AS were killed. (R. Poirson)

Both Mégevand and Fromes recovered from their wounds, this picture *(left)* being taken in September 1944 when a still weak 'Pan-Pan' was greeted by his men on his return from hospital. Tried by a military court at Lyons in November 1945, SS-Hauptscharführer Fromes was found guilty of many crimes committed in Haute-Savoie during the occupation and sentenced to death. He was executed in March 1946 and is now buried in the German Military Cemetery at Dagneux. (R. Poirson) *Above:* The scene of the drama in Avenue de Genève where the Galbert barracks has recently been razed to the ground.

Late on the evening of the 18th, 'Nizier' sent a message to the 'commander of the German forces' proposing a meeting next morning at his lakeside CP at Chavoires, four kilometres east of Annecy. 'Nizier' assured the German commander that all his men would be treated as POWs. After some hesitation — as his orders were to put up a fight — Oberst Friedrich Meyer, the commander of Verbindungsstab 988, agreed to send two of his close subordinates, Hauptmann Leopold Sedlazcek and Major Walter Eggers, to parley with the French and early next day, they arrived at Chavoires in a car flying a white flag *(left).* **(Archives Départementales)** *Right:* **This is the D909, looking in the direction of Annecy.**

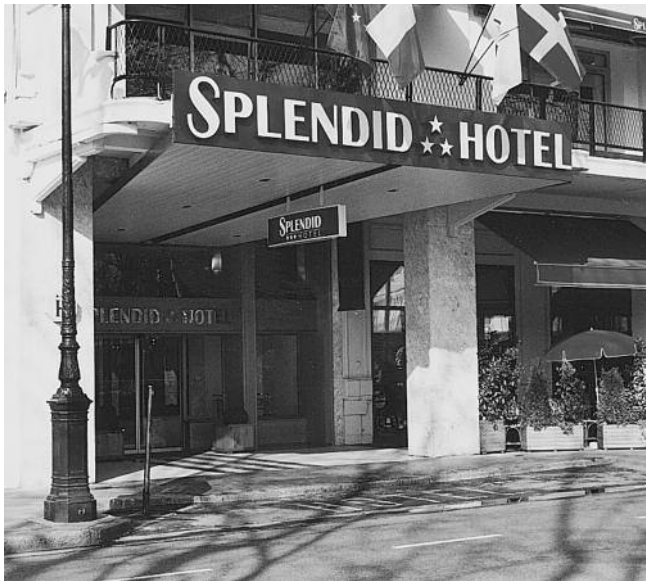
'Nizier' demanded immediate unconditional surrender but the Germans insisted on a guarantee against ill-treatment by the population. Sedlazcek and Eggers then returned to Annecy to confer with Meyer and they were back at the villa in Chavoires by 10 a.m. with a note from him giving them power to accept the French conditions. *Left:* **'Nizier' (centre, with a beret) welcomes Eggers (right, in white jacket) and Sedlazcek (saluting).**

Unfortunately no comparison is possible today as the villa lies in secluded grounds behind locked gates although a plaque outside announces it as the Villa Libération. The whole party then adjourned to the Splendid Hotel (see page 50) where Meyer was waiting to sign the final act of surrender. *Right:* **A rather dubious Hauptmann Sedlazcek is pictured in front of the hotel entrance. (R. Poirson)**

Above left: **This young German sentry at the Soldatenheim of Verbindungsstab 988 has just surrendered. A gendarme is frisking him to check for hidden weapons.** *Above right:* **The Hôtel d'Angleterre in Rue Royale, which the Germans had commandeered to establish their soldiers' club, closed some years ago and today it has been converted for use as offices.** *Right:* **Escorted by a member of the resistance armed with a Sten, Hauptmann Sedlazcek was pictured walking past the front of the post office in Rue de la Poste. He was probably on his way to the Saint-François school where he was taken to obtain the surrender of the SS-Polizei elements billeted there. Protecting the entrance to the post office are barricades recently built by the Germans to shield their sentries from attack. The reason for singling out this particular building for attention was that it contained the main telephone exchange. A similar defence post was built on each corner. Also note that German street signs have not yet been removed: both the 'Soldatenheim' and 'Verbindungsstab' notices still point towards Rue Royale. (Archives Départementales)**

Meanwhile, another sentry has been relieved of his rifle in front of another German quarters at the Hôtel Sévigné.

The same canal bridge on Rue Royale, now a pedestrian precinct. (Archives Départementales)



Left: **Warmly congratulated by the population, Capitaine 'Jean' (Yves Godard), the renowned AS commander, poses in front of Meyer's former command post in the Splendid Hôtel.**

Right: **Overlooking the Canal du Vassé, the same hotel is still in business on the Quai Eustache Chappuis. (Archives Départementales)**

Left: **German prisoners are being marched along Rue Carnot to captivity in the Galbert barracks. These men are mostly SS-Polizei and they were probably reassuring themselves and thinking that, at least for them, the war was over. Actually, it was not. On August 20, as they prepared to evacuate Lyons, the Germans simply disposed of 80 of their French prisoners by executing them at Saint-Genis. The following day, the newly-assigned French Commissar of the Republic for the sector, Yves Farge, sent a letter to the SD commander, SS-Obersturmbannführer Werner Knab, telling him that, in reprisal, he had given orders to shoot 80 German prisoners. And he warned that if the Germans executed any more POWs, then even more German prisoners would be shot. Farge also approached the Red Cross in Geneva to transmit a request to Germany that the FFI should be immediately granted combatant status, with normal rights as prisoners of war. On the 23rd, notices signed by 'Ostier' (Prefect) and 'Nizier' (FFI commander) were posted in Annecy declaring in the name of the Provisional Government of the French Republic, that '80 of the German prisoners held in this department' were to be executed as a reprisal for the killing of 80 Frenchmen by the German police at Lyons. That same day, August 23, Knab turned over Montluc prison and its 1,200 inmates to the French. While the Red Cross attempted to persuade Berlin to agree, Farge was afraid that the Germans would take any delay for weakness so he pressed 'Nizier' to comply with his order to execute the 80 Germans forthwith. Six officers and 34 men were chosen alphabetically from a POW camp at Annecy and in the early hours of August 28 they were shot ten at a time at Sacconges where the Germans had themselves executed so many resisters (see page 36). After the ultimatum had been delivered, 'Nizier' waited for another six days and then, in the absence of any answer from Berlin, completed the executions. On September 2, 40 more Germans including three officers were chosen from a camp near Bonneville and shot five at a time, this time near the ruin of the burned-out manor house at Habère-Lullin (see page 17). (Archives Départementales)**

Around 11 a.m., those groups of resisters who had set up roadblocks on the outskirts of Annecy entered the city to the ecstatic welcome of the local population. *Left:* This MAN lorry (captured from the Germans as indicated by its Polizei registration plate) drives up Rue du Pâquier. *Right:* Today, such a manoeuvre would be forbidden! (Archives Départementales)

The Armée Secrète descended on Annecy from all points of the compass: Compagnie 'Pan-Pan' from the west (see page 47); Compagnie 'Joubert' from the south-west; Compagnie 'Millau' from the south along the lakeside; Compagnie 'Baron' from the east and Compagnie 'Forestier' from the north. Compagnie '93-27' of the FTP arrived from the south and Compagnie '93-17' from the north. *Right:* This Berliet was pictured proceeding down Rue Royale, the main thoroughfare. The whole population of Annecy soon filled the streets *(below)* as the FFI paraded through the city. It is important to remember that Haute-Savoie was liberated by the FFI alone — the Allied forces which landed in the Riviera still being several hundred miles away. Actually, the first US soldiers did not arrive in Annecy until August 26. This whole area comprising Rue Carnot (see page 50), Rue du Pâquier *(above)* and Rue Royale, is now a pedestrian precinct but the 'Fidèle Berger' that can be seen on the right of the picture *(right)* is still the best tea room in Annecy. (Archives Départementales)

A motley collection of commandeered vehicles, the leading one being driven by a squad of gendarmes, crosses the Place de la Libération. We are looking towards the Rue du Pâquier (see the picture at the top of the page). *Right:* In the days that followed, those girls who had participated in what was euphemistically described as 'horizontal collaboration' with the occupiers were arrested. Submitted to the scissors, they were then paraded through the town on September 3. Such scenes which happened so often in August 1944 reflect the down side of the glorious days of the liberation of France. (Archives Départementales)

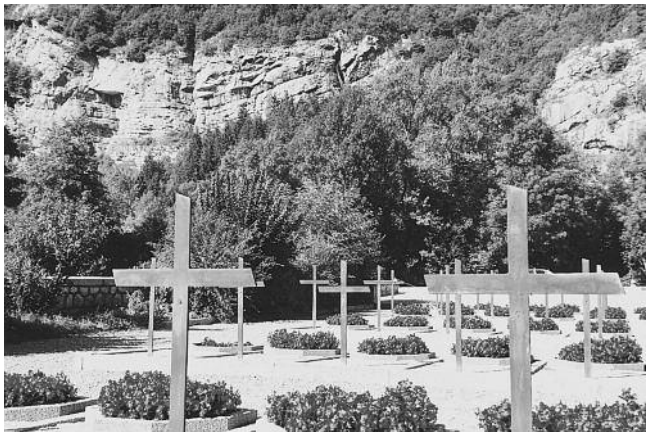
Above: **After their liberation, the population of Annecy gathered in front of the First World War memorial to pay their respects. In front stand the Resistance leaders L-R: 'Ostier' (Georges Guidollet), 'Grand' (André Augagneur), 'Cantinier' (Jean Rosenthal), 'Nizier' (Joseph Lambroscini) and 'Niveau' (Léon F. Ball, an American officer with the OSS).** *Below:* **Great grandchildren of the liberators cross what is now the Place de la Libération in the heart of Annecy.**

As to the FFI, over 135,000 hurried to eastern France in September to formally enrol in the French Army as it approached the German border and 60,000 more followed by mid-October (see *After the Battle* No. 97).

In October 1945, the French people were called to vote to decide on a new constitution. The Fourth Republic was born and in November de Gaulle was named as the head of a Provisional Government. It did not last long. In January 1946, embittered to see the parties wallowing in petty politics, de Gaulle left. He was not to return to power until summoned by popular demand in 1958 to form the Fifth Republic.

In the early hours of the 19th, Edouard Peccoud ('Quino') and other members of the Armée Secrète met the Milice commander in Annecy, Yvon Barbaroux, and his staff to persuade them to surrender. To this they finally agreed, subject to the proviso that their men would be treated as POWs until such time that they were tried by a legal court. The 100 or so Miliciens were marched to Grand-Bornand by way of Faverges. All along the route, the population showed its hatred by spitting, shouting obscenities and throwing stones. On the 21st, following instructions from the CFLN, 'Nizier' established a court-martial made up of five judges: Commandant 'Grand' (the court president) and Commandant 'André' of the FTP; Lieutenant 'Morel' and Lieutenant 'Roby' of the AS; and Commandant 'Clément'. Throughout August 21-22, all 97 defendants were interrogated by three inspectors before the court convened at 10 a.m. on the 23rd. One by one, the defendants appeared, a barrister being allowed five minutes to plead each case. By 4 a.m. on the 24th, all 97 had been heard and two barristers summed up before the court retired to deliberate. At 6 a.m. the verdicts were announced: 76 men had been found guilty and sentenced to death, and 21 were judged innocent. *Above and below left:* **The condemned were immediately taken to the Bouchet valley and, beginning at 8 a.m., were shot five at a time by a squad of 20 FTP. The executions continued for some three hours, the last words on the lips of many being 'Vive la France!' (F. Rey)** *Below right:* **The execution valley lies two kilometres east of Grand-Bornand. Today a winter ski run passes just in front of the small cemetery where 44 Miliciens are still buried today.**

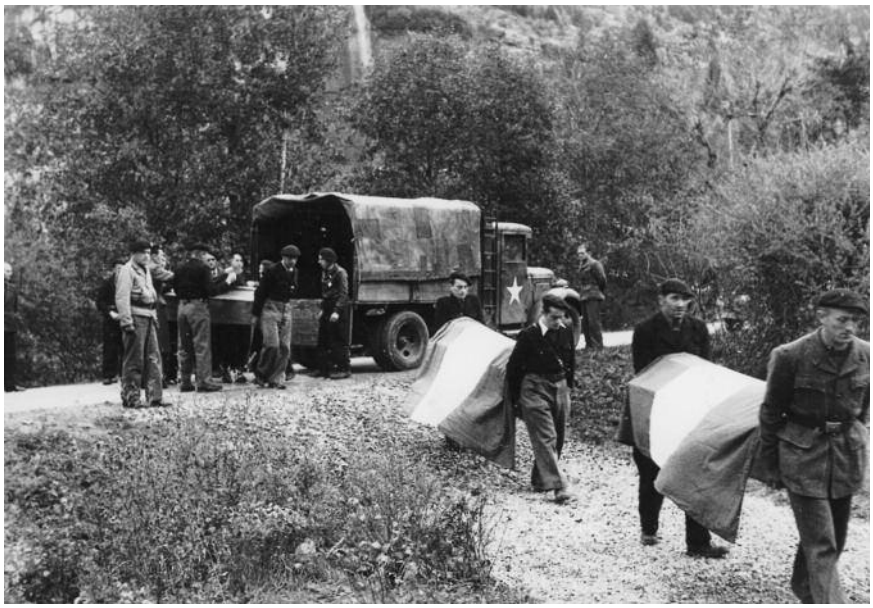
By mid-November 1944, Pierre Marion, the ex-Préfet of Haute-Savoie, and Georges Lelong, the ex-Chief of Police, were awaiting their trial in Annecy prison. Around 10 a.m. on November 16, a dozen resisters from the FTP surprised the prison guards and forcefully removed Lelong and Marion from their cells. They took them straight to a quarry by the lakeside at La Puya and summarily shot them. *Left:* **Pierre Marion stands calmly awaiting his fate from the FTP firing squad** *(centre).* *Right:* **The same tree — a silent witness — still stands on the shore of Lake Annecy. Later, de Gaulle condemned the 'shameful incidents which had recently happened in the prisons of Maubeuge, Annecy, Bourges and Alès'. According to an investigation in the early 1950s, officially, 6,700 summary executions were carried out during the occupation and 4,400 in the months following liberation, only about a quarter of the latter being preceded by a de facto trial. (R. Poirson)**



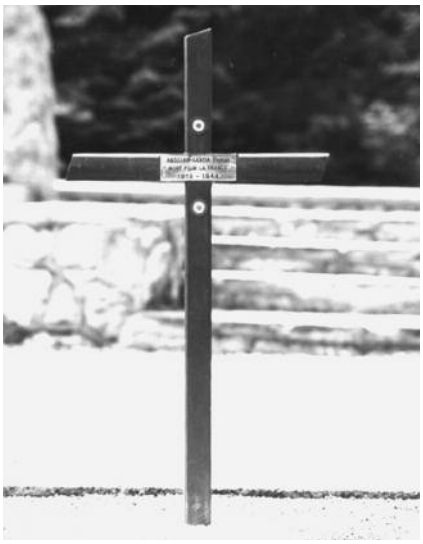
The many Glières resisters shot by the Germans in the Thônes sector were buried in a field near the Morette bridge, two kilometres west of Thônes, and, following the liberation, the bodies of Resistance fighters killed in other villages around Glières were progressively concentrated there. *Left:* **In November 1944, Général de Gaulle came to Haute-Savoie to pay his respects to the soldiers of Glières.** *Right:* **Although there are 105 crosses in the Morette cemetery today, not all are graves as a few are merely symbolic to remember those who disappeared during the withdrawal and have no known grave.**

AN ASSESSMENT

The Resistance and Vichy: did they serve France? One body of opinion claims that while the Resistance preserved the dignity and the traditions of France, Vichy was an illegitimate regime, and its collaboration a policy of shame and treason. Those opposing this view say that Vichy performed a courageous service to save what could be saved and limited France's suffering by compromising and accommodating, while the military contribution of the Resistance was insignificant and only divided the French people. There is no doubt that Vichy obtained concessions by collaborating with the Germans, the more significant being to postpone the total occupation of France for over two years, though it is impossible to dispute that its zeal to collaborate went further than what was necessary to limit the country's sufferings. Undoubtedly it was the Resistance that restored the self-respect of a defeated nation, and it was de Gaulle and the Resistance that gave France a seat at the post-war table of the victors. A third tendentious yet reconciliating view is that France needed both Pétain and de Gaulle; that Vichy and the Resistance were complementary. In the words of a French historian, Robert Aron, while Vichy was 'the shield of France', the Resistance was 'the sword'.



This picture was taken on October 18, 1944, when the remains of a dozen more heroes of the French Resistance were brought in for reburial, among them Maurice Anjot.



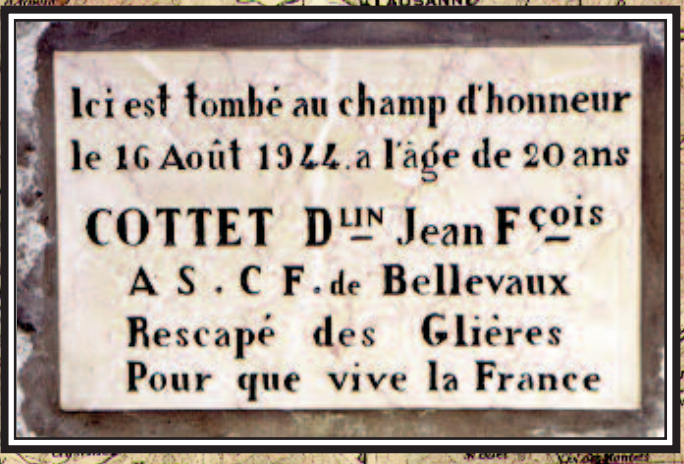
Having saved Frank Griffiths, an RAF pilot, from capture (see *After the Battle* No. 26), Jean Dujourd'hui *(left)* **was later one of the three members of the 'Simon' group to escape from the Mercier ambush (see page 19). He then joined Glières, was captured near Thorens by the Milice and so badly treated that he died on April 9. Both the commanders of Glières, Maurice Anjot and Théodose Morel** *(centre),* **now rest with their men.** *Right:* **Florian Andujar-Garcia, was a Spaniard killed at Nâves together with Anjot on March 27 (see page 33). A memorial museum has now been created alongside the cemetery.**

Many departments of France were completely liberated by the FFI alone and in Haute-Savoie the Resistance captured at least 2,500 prisoners. When the Americans arrived in Annecy on the afternoon of August 26, one week after the liberation of the city, they asked 'Nizier', the FFI commander: 'Where is the enemy?' He took them to a camp where some of the prisoners had been taken and proudly commented: 'The enemy? Here he is'. *Left:* **A camp for prisoners of war was soon established in a former French Army base at Novel on the north-eastern outskirts of Annecy. This is the entrance to the 143rd POW Camp as it appeared in 1945.** *Right:* **Since demolished, the site is now occupied by a residential estate on the Avenue de Novel but local inhabitants were able to show Jean Paul where the entrance once stood. (H. Odesser)**

Of the 163,000 French men and women who died in German concentration camps, over 70,000 belonged to one sort of resistance movement or another, of whom over 20,000 were killed in action or executed after their arrest. Yet it is difficult to appraise the contribution of the Resistance toward weakening the German forces in France for, not only was there often no recording of the details of their operations (many resisters were killed or captured so the evidence of their battle was lost with them), but there is no yardstick by which to measure the effectiveness of an irregular force whose role was strategic rather than tactical. Nevertheless, Resistance support to 'Overlord' was far more general that the Allies had planned and far more effective than they had hoped. Its contribution to preventing German reinforcements from reaching the battlefield turned out to be of a size and importance comparable with that of the Allied air forces. Not least, as pointed out by Eisenhower in his report to the Combined Chiefs-of-Staff, 'they had, by their ceaseless harassing activities, surrounded the Germans with a terrible atmosphere of danger and hatred which ate into the confidence of the leaders and the courage of the soldiers.'

The war was not over and at the beginning of September units of Resistance soldiers from Haute-Savoie were still fighting the retreating Germans, particularly in Savoie where they were falling back in the Tarentaise and Maurienne valleys (see *After the Battle* No. 97). From now on, members of the Resistance progressively enrolled in the regular French Army and in September 1944, the Armée Secrète units of Haute-Savoie were organised into the 'Glières' battalion. *Centre and left:* **These pictures were taken in Annecy on the 23rd, when the new battalion was presented to its commander, Commandant Yves Godard (right in the centre picture). Having merged with the 'Foges' battalion of the FTP, in December the 'Glières' battalion adopted the identity of the 27ème BCA which had been disbanded in 1942. Colonel Jean Vallette d'Osia (with spectacles in the centre photo) was soon to be given command of the infantry of the new 27ème Division Alpine.** *Right:* **The Pâquier field beside the lake in Annecy is still a marvellous place for a promenade.**

ICI TOMBAIT LE
16 AOUT 1944
LE FTPF
JEAN PEILLEX 24 ANS
POUR QUE VIVE
LA FRANCE


Ici est tombé au champ d'honneur
le 16 Août 1944. a l'âge de 20 ans
COTTET Dlin Jean Fçois
A S . C F. de Bellevaux
Rescapé des Glières
Pour que vive la France

A.S.- C.F. BIOGE
ICI EST TOMBÉ
CHARLES GIRAUD
22-1-1915 – 16 AOÛT 1944
POUR QUE VIVE
LA FRANCE

ICI TOMBAIT LE 16 AOUT 1944
GROS RAYMOND
A L'AGE DE 21 ANS
POUR QUE VIVE LA FRANCE

Ici
tombait le 16 Aout 1944
le F.T.P.F.
GRUILLOT Louis 25 ans
Pour que vive la France